THE ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL

UNDER

SIR ANDREW FRASER, K.C.S.I.

1903-08.

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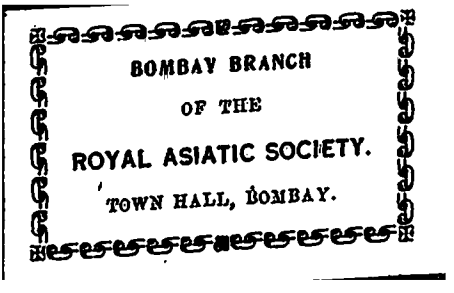

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THE

ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL

UNDER

SIR ANDREW FRASER, K.C.S.I.

1903–1908.

Sir Andrew Henderson Leith Fraser, K.C.S.I., was appointed to the Indian Civil Service after the examination of 1869, and on arriving in India in 1871, was posted to the Central Provinces. After holding various subordinate offices, he was appointed Commissioner of Excise in 1881, Director of Agriculture in 1882, and Secretary to the Chief Commissioner in 1890. In 1891 he was made a Commissioner; and in 1893-94 he served as a member of the Hemp Drugs Commission. The value of his services was recognized by the bestowal of the decoration of a Companion of the Order of the Star of India in 1897. In 1898 he was appointed to officiate as Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department; and next year he returned to the Central Provinces as Chief Commissioner, an office which he held till 1902, when he was appointed President of the Police Commission. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal at that time was Sir John Woodburn, K.C.S.I.; and on his death in November 1902 Sir Andrew Fraser, who was created a Knight Commander of the Star of India in January 1903, was appointed to be Lieutenant-Governor. Mr. (now Sir James) Bourdillon was appointed to officiate, until the work of the Police Commission was completed; and Sir Andrew assumed charge of the office on the 2nd November 1903. In 1906 he went to England on six months' leave, when Mr. (now Sir Lancelot) Hare was appointed to officiate. Consequent on the resignation by Sir Bamfylde Fuller of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Eastern Bengal and Assam, Mr. Hare was appointed to that office, and Mr. F. A. Slacke, C.S.I., officiated as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal till the return of Sir Andrew Fraser in October 1906,

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

Partition of Bengal.

When Sir Andrew Fraser became Lieutenant-Governor, the Province of Bengal extended over an area of 196,408 square miles and contained a population of 78,493,410 souls: an area but little less than that of France or of the German Empire, and a population exceeding that of the United States. It had been felt that the administration of this vast area and teeming population was beyond the powers of a single individual. This statement does not mean merely that no Lieutenant-Governor could cope satisfactorily with the work of this enormous Province. It means much more than that. It means that no head of a Department could grapple with the mass of business with which he had to deal or become acquainted with the area of his charge. There was no department that was not overburdened, and that did not show in some part of the Province the natural results of attempting too much.

In 1853, before the creation of a Lieutenant-Governorship, Lord Dalhousie had expressed his conviction that the Government of Bengal alone imposed upon the Governor-General "a burden which in its present mass is more than mortal man can fitly bear"; and twenty years later Sir George Campbell, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, wrote:—"It is totally impossible that any man can properly perform single-handed the work of this great Government." Since 1873, however, the population of the Province had increased by over 26 millions; the increase of population had been accompanied by a remarkable development of the resources of the country; while the spread of English education and the wider diffusion of the native press had tended to demand more precise methods of administration, and in every way to place a heavier strain upon the head of the Government and upon all ranks of his subordinates. It was felt that the burden was excessive, and there was accumulating evidence of a consequent deterioration in the standards of government, notably in portions of Eastern Bengal. The Government of India accordingly came to the conclusion that the relief of the Bengal Government was an administrative necessity of the first order, and that relief could only be effected by reducing the territory under the Lieutenant-Governor and not by organic changes in the form of government. At the same time, they were impressed with the importance of making Assam a self-contained and independent administration with a service of its own, and of providing for its future commercial and industrial expansion.

Accordingly, in December 1903, they formulated proposals for the reconstitution of the Province, of which the main features were:—(1) The transfer from Bengal to Assam of the Chittagong Division, the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh, and the State of Hill Tippera; (2) the transfer from Bengal to the Central Provinces of the greater part of Chota Nagpur; (3) the transfer to Bengal from the Central Provinces of the Sambalpur district and of five Feudatory States, viz., Patna, Bamra, Sonpur, Kalahandi and Rairakhol; and (4) the transfer to Bengal from Madras of the Ganjam district and the Ganjam and Vizagapatam Agency Tracts. The object of the first two of these four proposals was to reduce the area of Bengal; and the object of the last two was to bring into the Orissa Division fragments of the Uriya country too small to be governed properly in the Provinces to which they belonged. It soon became clear that these proposals, so far as they affected Eastern Bengal, were not large enough, and in February 1904 the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, in a series of speeches delivered in Eastern Bengal, foreshadowed the willingness of Government to consider a wider scheme, involving the creation of a Lieutenant-Governorship, with a Legislative Council and an independent revenue authority, and the transfer of as much territory as would be required to justify this larger project. Sir Andrew Fraser had held several large conferences with representatives of all sections of the community, so as to ascertain public opinion as to the principal features required in a sound scheme of redistribution; and Lord Curzon's tour, made with the same object, resulted in the wider scheme. The scheme emanated from public discussion and public opinion rather than from the Government itself.

In considering these proposals, Sir Andrew Fraser kept two considerations steadily in view. He agreed that, under the altered circumstances of the country, the territory under his control was too large for a Local Government to administer properly, and he held that the primary object to be aimed at was to improve administration in Bengal by reducing its area. The next object, he urged, was to select the districts to be transferred in such a manner as to secure the best interests of the people and efficiency of administration. Holding these views, he was unable to accept the proposals of the Government of India in their entirety. He was opposed to the transfer of Ganjam and the Agency Tracts from Madras, because the Uriya element in these tracts was comparatively insignificant, because strong ties of interest and administrative expediency bound them to Madras, and

because he was assured that their transfer was not only unnecessary, but would throw an additional burden on the already overburdened administration of Bengal—a burden that would be all the greater because of their peculiar linguistic and racial conditions. He was also opposed to the transfer of any of the districts of Chota Nagpur to the Central Provinces. He pointed out that they were practically inaccessible from the Central Provinces, whereas they were already connected by railway with Bengal and Bihar; that it was desirable that the Bengal Government should carry out and complete the measures already initiated by it for improving the administration in this part of the country; and that the mining and industrial interests involved demanded their retention as part of Bengal. This last consideration was also urged by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

At the same time, Sir Andrew was of opinion that it was desirable for the five Hindi-speaking Feudatory States of Chota Nagpur, viz., Jashpur, Sirguja, Udaipur, Korea and Changbhakar, to be transferred to Chhattisgarh in the Central Provinces, and for the five Uriya-speaking States of the Central Provinces to be transferred to Orissa in Bengal. This exchange he advocated on grounds of administrative convenience, as securing the consolidation of the Feudatory States into two large groups, each speaking one language: the Hindi group to belong to the Central Provinces and the Uriya group to Bengal. His Honour also agreed to the proposal that Sambalpur—a district of which he had special knowledge—should be transferred to Bengal. The administration of that district had long presented grave difficulties, owing to its being the only part of the Central Provinces in which Uriya was spoken. In 1901, when Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, he had recommended its transfer to the Orissa Division; and the same reasons now actuated him to urge this measure on the Government of India.

As regards Eastern Bengal, Sir Andrew Fraser held that the main objects to be pursued were to secure both substantial and permanent relief to the overburdened administration of Bengal and to arrange for the transfer of a homogeneous area. The original proposal of the Government of India, he pointed out, did not go far enough. It would be better to constitute a new Province, comprising Assam, the Chittagong and Dacca Divisions, and the districts of Pabna, Bogra and Rangpur. The new Province should be given both a Legislative Council and a Board of Revenue, and should have a complete administration of its own. It should be of

sufficient size and importance to justify such an organization; and this was all the more necessary because the districts of Eastern Bengal had suffered from neglect in the past, and had been under-officered to such an extent, that it was a matter for wonder, not that the administration had failed to be as efficient as it should be, but that it had been as efficient as it was.

Subsequently, the Government of India suggested that the main object of the scheme of reconstruction would be more certainly attained, and the scheme itself placed on a more permanent footing, if the area transferred were to be enlarged by adding to it the districts of Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Malda and the State of Cooch Behar. Sir Andrew Fraser discussed these enlarged proposals fully with the Members of the Board of Revenue and the most senior officers in the Province; and, with the exception of one officer, who was inclined to advocate the retention in Bengal of the district of Jalpaiguri, there was complete unanimity in accepting them. His Honour himself was also in favour of the enlarged scheme. He had already recommended that the well-defined and clearly recognized area of Eastern Bengal should be handed over, and the addition of the closely connected area of Northern Bengal appeared equally desirable. Its effect would be to bring within the new Province all the districts in which the Muhammadans were in a majority. Their power and influence would thus enable them much more easily to attract attention to their necessities and their rights. Not only was the population of the transferred area homogeneous, but the transfer of such a large area would also tend to mitigate the feeling of severance and to reconcile the people to the change. On these grounds, Sir Andrew Fraser supported the proposals of the Government of India.

Eventually, in July 1905, the Government of India announced the decision arrived at, viz., that the Divisions of Dacca, Chittagong and Rajshahi (except Darjeeling), the district of Malda and the State of Hill Tippera should be transferred to the newly-formed Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, the area under the jurisdiction of the Bengal Government being thus reduced by 50,000 square miles and its population by 25,000,000. The five Hindi-speaking Native States of Jashpur, Sirguja, Udaipur, Korea and Changbhakar were at the same time to be transferred to the Central Provinces; and the district of Sambalpur (with the exception of two Hindi-speaking zamindaris) and the Uriya-speaking States of Patna, Kalahandi, Sonpur, Bamra and Rairakhol were to be attached to Bengal. This decision

was carried into effect on the 16th October 1905, the result of these transfers of territory being that the Province of Bengal comprised an area of 148,592 square miles with a population of 54,662,529 persons.

After the announcement of the first proposals of the Government of India, His Honour soon found that the leaders of Bengali opinion had formed the mistaken impression that the transferred districts were to lose their own identity by being merged in Assam, which was represented as a backward tract—a land of hobgoblins—and that they would lose the benefit of the laws and privileges they had hitherto enjoyed. Sir Andrew Fraser promptly reassured those who held this view, and obtained an authoritative assurance from the Government of India that the jurisdiction of the High Court would remain unaltered, and that transfer would not affect the laws in force. This view, however, formed the basis of the first agitation; and those interested in fomenting that agitation did their best, by exaggerated reiterations of it, to affect the popular mind. Subsequently, when it was made clear that the real design was to create a new Province in which Eastern Bengal would have an influential and prominent part, the attitude of the public was greatly altered. Many supported the enlarged scheme, and there were many others who would have given it their support openly, if they had not been pledged to the opposition already organized. Strong pressure was brought to bear on those who favoured the scheme, or were lukewarm, to join in the opposition; while those who had given it their outspoken support were so treated that many who shared their views kept silence. This opposition was evoked and organized by certain influential Bengali Hindus, especially members of the legal profession, who were influenced, in part at least, by the consideration that their personal interests were at stake. Most of them were not residents of the districts concerned, but had their headquarters and interests in Calcutta.

The common people took no interest in the proposed reconstitution of the Province until its opponents made strenuous efforts to enlist their sympathies. As regards the educated classes, there can be no doubt that the expanded proposal would have been accepted by many of those who opposed the original scheme, had it not been for the tactics of those who were interested in keeping up the connection with Calcutta. This was no matter for wonder, considering the manner in which men of influence, who either publicly favoured, or even professed indifference to, the

scheme, were attacked in the Press and subjected to annoyance in society. Several gentlemen of high position, while expressing to the Lieutenant-Governor in private their thorough acceptance of the scheme as likely to be most advantageous to the districts concerned, asked him to excuse their desire not to make their views public; while the opinion of certain large landholders in Eastern Bengal in favour of the redistribution of districts only came to notice incidentally through a reference in a letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. The whole agitation, in fact, showed clearly the tyranny of the professional wire-puller: the organization of a system under which a particular set of opinions expressed practically in the same words was sent out with a mandate from Calcutta to be echoed in the form of telegraphic protests and formal memorials from a number of different places in Bengal. In this movement the Muhammadans took no part, for they were convinced of the advantages of the creation of the new Province.

An account will be given later of the agitation which followed the announcement of that measure, and for which it was the occasion rather than the cause. It is referred to as the Partition of Bengal, that being a common and well-understood term for what was not a dismemberment of one Province, but rather the reconstruction of the two Provinces of Bengal and Assam by a readjustment of administrative boundaries and a duplication of administrative machinery.

Reconstitution of the Patna Division.

Another important administrative change was the reconstitution of the Patna Division, which was sanctioned with the approval of its inhabitants. This measure affected a tract with nearly half the area of Eastern Bengal, while the population was over three-fifths of that of the transferred districts. In other words, the Patna Division had an area of 23,748 square miles and a population, according to the census of 1901, of over 15½ million souls. It was almost co-extensive in area with Belgium and Holland combined, and it had more inhabitants than Spain and Portugal combined. It had long been recognized that this charge was an impossible one for a single Commissioner, and for many years past that officer, while remaining responsible for its administration, had been assisted by an Additional Commissioner. This arrangement, however, was not satisfactory, for the Commissioner could not hold in his hands all the threads of work and had not that complete control of the Division which is essential for efficient administration. The Additional Commissioner was a colleague to whom certain branches of work were allotted; and the result was that, so far

at least as those branches were concerned, the Commissioner himself lost grasp of his charge. He thus became unacquainted with work not only important in itself, but also most important from the light it might throw on the general administration of the different districts.

Sir Andrew Fraser accordingly agreed with his predecessor that, while the work of the Division was too heavy for one man to cope with and two officers were necessary for its administration, that administration could not be effective under the system of dual control. The Division, he felt, would never be administered with real efficiency until each officer had his own charge to administer for himself. On these grounds His Honour was convinced that it was a matter of administrative necessity to divide the Patna Division into two charges. He proposed therefore to form the South Gangetic districts of Patna, Gaya and Shahabad into a Commissionership to be known as the Patna Division, while the districts of Saran, Champaran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, north of the Ganges, would be formed into a separate Commissionership with headquarters at Muzaffarpur, to be known as the Tirhut Division. The population of the northern portion is very much larger than that of the southern portion. On the other hand, as regards area, the two portions are not unequal; while the work of each of the three southern districts is individually heavier than that of any of the districts to the north, and the southern districts include the very important municipality of Patna. The result is that the work of the three southern districts is very nearly equal to that of the four northern districts.

Sir Andrew found that public opinion was also in favour of the reconstitution of the Division; but, as the matter was an important one affecting the interests of Bihar, it was decided to publish the scheme formally, to explain its purpose, and afford the people concerned an opportunity to criticize it and offer suggestions. The result showed that public feeling had been rightly interpreted; for with only one dissentient voice the people of the Division approved the scheme. The proposals of His Honour were accordingly sanctioned in June 1908.

Relations with Sikkim.

Shortly after Sir Andrew Fraser assumed charge of his office, the Tibetan expedition took place. It was then decided, as a matter of political expediency, that the Political Officer of Sikkim should be subject to the Government of India in matters affecting Tibet, but should continue to be under the control of the Government of Bengal in matters concerning the internal administration of Sikkim and its relations with

British India. Sir Andrew Fraser considered that this system of dual control was not altogether satisfactory. It was, in his opinion, desirable that the complete political charge of this frontier State should be transferred permanently to the Government of India, because, situated as Sikkim is on the borders of Tibet, Bhutan and Nepal, political questions connected with it are of more than provincial importance. These views were accepted by the Government of India, and the control of Sikkim was taken over by that Government with effect from 1st April 1906.

The area under the administration of the Lieutenant-Governor, as constituted after this change, is 146,774 square miles with a population of 54,603,515. Altogether 115,819 square miles, with a population of 50,772,067, are in British territory, and 29,955 square miles, with a population of 3,931,448, are comprised in Native States.

POLITICAL MOVEMENTS.

The quinquennium during which Sir Andrew Fraser was Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was a period of unrest and political agitation. There had long been much latent discontent among the educated classes in Bengal,* especially among those who had received their education in England or America, where they had become imbued with ideas of liberty and equality. The discontent had found expression in an organized but constitutional agitation, of which the main object was to secure for Indians a larger share in the government of the country. With this object the National Congress had been established some twenty years ago, but there was a growing feeling that that institution had failed to produce any substantial change in the system of administration. Some Bengalis, indeed, went further and set up complete self-government as their aim. They refused to admit that in having such an aspiration they were 'a people crying for the moon,' and they were induced to think that they had 'rulers mothering them with promises.' Unfortunately, too, the discontent of the educated classes had been to some extent aggravated by want of sympathy

* The census statistics of 1901 show that in Bengal as then constituted, *i.e.*, the present Bengal and Eastern Bengal, 4¼ million persons or 5·5 per cent. of the population were literate, *i.e.*, could read and write some language, while 89 males and 6 females out of every 10,000 of each sex could read and write English.

between them and the official classes, by the thoughtless and inconsiderate behaviour of a few Europeans in their intercourse with them, and by the constant and gross exaggeration in certain papers of every incident that might be regarded as indicating or likely to cause ill-feeling.

When first established, the vernacular papers—and they were few—devoted but small space to the discussion of political questions or large administrative measures, and items of news and speculations on religious and social subjects constituted the major portion of their contents. Political questions received very meagre treatment: the writers offered their opinions with diffidence, and their tone was respectful. A change was soon noticeable; and as early as 1878 the then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Ashley Eden, complained in no uncertain terms of the sedition and gross disloyalty of some of the vernacular papers, and of their attempts to sow the seeds of disaffection to the British rule in the minds of ignorant people. "They habitually attack and misrepresent the Government in terms intended to weaken the authority of Government, and with a reckless disregard of truth and fact which would not be tolerated in any country in the world. The personal abuse, the falsehoods, the scurrility and the exaggerations which are applied to individual officers may well, as heretofore, be left to the ordinary action of the law courts, or be treated with the contempt they deserve. What I do recognize, and long have recognized, as a fact, is, that the licentiousness of the Press has, under false ideas of freedom and independence, been allowed to reach a stage which promptly calls, in the interests of the public at large, for the interference of the Legislature." To check the evil, the Vernacular Press Act, IX of 1878, was passed, its main object being to place newspapers published in the vernacular languages of India under better control, and to furnish the Government with more effective means than the existing law provided of punishing and repressing seditious writings which were calculated to produce disaffection towards the Government in the minds of an ignorant population. In 1880 a Liberal Government came into power in England under Mr. Gladstone, who had denounced the Act. It was therefore repealed in 1882, but its repeal was generally attributed to the agitation which had been maintained.

For some time after the enactment of this Act, the tone of the Native Press improved, subjects of public interest being discussed in more temperate language; but when Sir Andrew Fraser assumed charge of the Province, its principal

characteristics were the increasing prominence given to political and administrative questions, and a reckless, exaggerated, and occasionally disloyal tone. Though good was sometimes done by bringing to light a case of oppression or abuse, or by giving indication of the trend of public opinion among the Indian educated community, the general attitude of a considerable section of the Press was merely one of hostility to Government and its measures. There were some notable exceptions; but in too many cases the motives of Government were misrepresented and its officers attacked, while the more virulent papers lost no opportunity of fostering racial hatred. They represented that the law was not administered justly between Indians and Europeans, they denounced the latter as monopolizing the offices of State and draining the country of its wealth, and they drew imaginary pictures of the hardships and misery of the Indian people. These attacks were not without effect in stimulating discontent among the educated classes.

The vernacular papers also laid stress on the success of the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese war, and drew the moral that other Asiatics might have similar success in maintaining themselves against Europeans. Their insinuations were not lost on their readers, who began to feel the effervescence of the spirit of nationalization fermenting in Asia. Further, the discontent among the educated middle classes was aggravated by economic causes. For years past the *bhadralok*, as they are called in Bengal, have been hard hit by the steady rise in the price of food and other necessaries of life. Those having small fixed salaries have felt this most severely for they do not easily alter their traditional style of living or take up new and more lucrative methods of earning their livelihood. This state of things was attributed in some vague way to the system of Government and, by the disaffected, to the British exploiting the country.

In this connection, the readiness with which extravagant statements or wild rumours are accepted by a credulous people must be noted. Two instances of their proneness to believe such statements and rumours may be mentioned. The first was what was known as the "Head Scare," which occurred a few years ago. It was the result of a rumour that a sacrifice of human heads was required for the construction of a bridge near Howrah and that any one found in the streets after 9 P.M. would be carried away and have his head cut off. This wild rumour was believed in, and a number of natives employed in the mills near Howrah fled away to their homes. Some features of this panic are not

without significance. The rumour was spread by means of a Bengali pamphlet distributed in Calcutta. It was spread at the same time as another rumour that the Russians threatened to invade India. The educated classes made no efforts to expose its falsity. And it was believed by at least one thoughtful observer to have been an attempt to work on the superstition of the lower classes and stir up in them a hatred of Europeans.

The second panic, which was due to an equally absurd rumour, gave rise in August 1906 to what was commonly called the "Kidnapping Scare;" because there was a general belief that a number of men were going about trying to kidnap any young Bengali boys they could catch and carrying them off to the tea gardens in Assam, the Mauritius, and elsewhere. It arose out of a trumped-up story that he had been kidnapped, told by a youth to his father, in order to conceal the fact that he had got into bad company and suffered in consequence. The story was accepted by certain Indian newspapers, and a panic ensued among the Bengali population in Calcutta, leading to unprovoked assaults on various innocent persons on the suspicion that they were kidnappers. Some Punjabi football players, a European Assistant to a firm, a Bengali gentleman in his carriage, a Punjabi traveller, and others were attacked and beaten as kidnappers by mobs of educated as well as uneducated Bengalis. Two hackney carriages also were overturned and set fire to in different parts of the town. This scare showed the extreme eagerness with which even the wildest rumour may be seized upon and believed by the Indian population in Calcutta, and the degree of excitement that can be produced on the slenderest grounds among the lower classes of the people. It is only fair to add, however, that considerable help in allaying the panic was afforded by a number of Indian gentlemen, including the editor of an influential newspaper.

The discontent engendered by the influences mentioned above remained more or less latent until the announcement of the Partition of Bengal. There had been an organized opposition to that measure, emanating from Calcutta and supported by the legal profession, which in Bengal is composed mainly of Bengali Hindus and forms an influential though numerically small body. The paucity of the numbers of those opposed to the Partition was, however, made up by their activity and powers of organization; and a widespread but constitutional agitation was started. When the Partition of Bengal was announced in July 1905, the failure of this agitation enabled the malcontents to persuade others that

constitutional agitation was a failure, and that more vigorous measures should be taken.

Boycott and *swadeshi.*

The first effort of the agitators was to inaugurate a boycott movement, *i.e.*, a movement to boycott European goods, and in particular Manchester piece-goods, sugar and salt. These tactics were designed to attract attention to the alleged grievances of the Bengali Hindus, for it was hoped that the stoppage of the sale of Manchester goods would so affect the interests of the English mercantile community, that they would bring pressure to bear on the Home Government to annul the Partition. In this the agitators appear to have imitated the Chinese, who, in May 1905, had started a boycott of American goods as a protest against an Exclusion Treaty proposed by the United States. Closely connected with this movement was another called the *swadeshi* movement, the object of which was to encourage indigenous industries by starting new ones and reviving extinct or moribund handicrafts and manufactures:—generally to develop the resources of the country by and through the people, and in particular to substitute home-made for imported goods. The two movements were really distinct, though an effort was made to work them as part of one movement. For the *swadeshi* movement aimed at developing Indian industries for the supply of the home market, in competition with all other countries; while the boycott was intended to enforce a prohibition of the produce of certain European countries and especially British goods.

The *swadeshi* movement undoubtedly appealed to the better classes, whose interest in politics was not great; but though it obtained much sympathy, it made little headway, because the industries it sought to develop were nearly all in their infancy. The main efforts of the agitators, therefore, were directed not to the slow and laborious work of building up home industries, but to enforcing the boycott. In this they met at first with some success, for the Marwari merchants—one of the most important sections of the mercantile community—were induced by commercial considerations to suspend orders for a short time. The agitators also sought to enlist the sympathy of Muhammadans; but here their efforts ended in failure, for the Muhammadans refused to make common cause with the Bengali Hindus in the matter. Recourse was also had to other and more unscrupulous methods. The interest of some landlords was enlisted, and the boycott was enforced on their tenants, many of whom were coerced into buying no imported goods. The services of school-boys were also enlisted. They

were induced to picket shops and prevent, by force, if necessary, the purchase of any but *swadeshi* goods.

Another and more dangerous expedient was an attempt to give a religious sanction to the movement. In some places the ban of religious and social ostracism was laid on those Hindus who stood aloof. Reports were circulated that the blood and bones of cows and pigs were used to purify English salt and sugar, and that their fat formed part of the starch used for sizing piece-goods. Meetings were held in Hindu temples, and vows to boycott foreign goods were sworn in the name of Kali.

Movements following the Partition.

The Partition took effect on the 16th October 1905, and it cannot be denied that the measure was most unpopular with a section of the Bengali Hindus. It was stated that the measure had been decided upon without full opportunities for public criticism, though there had probably hardly ever been a measure more fully discussed before its adoption. Strenuous efforts were made to create an impression that the Bengali race was being divided in some way which has never been clearly stated. The more highly educated classes realized that their interests were affected, because the Muhammadans were now likely to exercise more influence on the administration and to obtain a fairer number of appointments. Lastly, but not least, there was a sentimental objection to the change; and the Bengali Hindu is an emotional person, with emotions easily roused and as easily played upon. Their sentiments and credulity had been taken advantage of by the agitators, and on the 16th October there was a remarkable demonstration. In Calcutta a large part of the Bengali Hindu population fasted throughout the day, shops were closed, and the fish-supply was stopped. The foundation-stone of a building called the National Federal Hall was laid; a fund was started for building the Hall—an abortive project—and for developing home industries and industrial education. The Hindus tied *rakhis* or yellow threads on their arms as a symbol of unity; and a vow was taken to continue the opposition to the Partition.

Though the Partition had been carried into effect, the agitation did not cease. In December 1905 a Liberal Ministry was formed, Mr. (now Lord) Morley being Secretary of State for India. The leaders of the movement thought that, if the opposition was persistent and vociferous enough, the Liberal Party might be induced to annul the measure. Meetings of protest were accordingly held; memorials were drawn up; the *swadeshi* and boycott movements were vigorously pushed. Various illegalities and acts of oppression

were committed by students, who were taught to resist force by force; and a general spirit of lawlessness was engendered. Government issued a circular instructing District Magistrates to utilize the services of the educational authorities in supressing this abuse. They were to appoint, if necessary, schoolmasters as special constables, so as to strengthen their authority over the students, and to warn the managing bodies and teachers of the danger of disaffiliation of their schools if they failed to stop the employment of the students in political agitation. Briefly, the object of these orders was to deal firmly but kindly with those school-boys and students who were being induced to leave their studies and betake themselves to political work, which, in some cases, had led to breaches of the peace and acts of violence. It was desired that they should not be dealt with by the police, so as to be carried to the jail or to the whipping triangle, but by the educational authorities themselves, who should exercise proper discipline in the institutions under their control. The orders were, in fact, designed to secure the public peace, as against school-boys and students, by school discipline rather than by the police; but their tenor was grossly misrepresented. Other action taken by the authorities to maintain law and order was similarly misconstrued, being represented as an attack on home industries inspired by a desire to bolster up English trade; and the Magistrates were held up to opprobrium.

The National Volunteers.

Reference may suitably be made here to the manner in which young men and school-boys were organized to promote the propaganda of the movement. It had for some time past been the custom for young Bengali men and college students, who were known collectively as *swadeshi* volunteers, to perform various services at political meetings, *e.g.*, in forming escorts for the speakers, seeing ticket-holders to their seats, and keeping order. After the celebration of the Sivaji festival at Calcutta in 1902, a desire for physical development set in among educated Bengali Hindus, and the young men began to practise fencing, *lathi*-play, etc. So far the students took no active part in politics. But when the anti-Partition movement was in progress, its leaders began to make use of bands of students, in order to swell the number of persons attending their meetings and processions, and also in order to enforce the boycott by picketting. A number of *samitis* or *akhras*, (*i.e.*, practically, athletic clubs), now sprung up in Calcutta and some places in the adjoining districts of Bengal. In these clubs young men and boys went through a course of physical training, drill

and discipline, and set to work to train themselves in *lathi*-exercises and wrestling. The members of these clubs were called National Volunteers; and the idea seems to have been that they would form a trained body able to resist force with force, and available for purposes of offence and defence. They were also used for other purposes, some being sent as messengers between those interested in keeping up the movement, others to collect funds, and others as emissaries to spread their propaganda. The National Volunteers were, however, neither so numerous, nor so active and mischievous as in Eastern Bengal. And the body of Volunteers organized in connection with the *Ardhodaya Yoga* in February 1908 worked cordially with the police and rendered good service in assisting the many thousands of pilgrims who came to Calcutta during that festival.

"Bande Mataram."

Strenuous efforts were made to give the movement an air of national unity, and a watchword was found in the expression *Bande Mataram*. This was the refrain of a song in a Bengali novel *Ananda-math* written by one of the best Bengal. novelists, Bankim Chandra Chatarji, and published in 1883 The name of the novel means "the monastery of happiness," and its subject was the revolt of a number of *sannyasis* or Hindu ascetics against the Muhammadans. The former were represented as having, in the course of their revolt, defeated some sepoys under an English commander, and after the action the *Bande Mataram* song was sung by their leader. The meaning of the expression has formed the subject of considerable speculation, some maintaining that it is an invocation of Kali, meaning "Hail Mother," others that it merely means "Hail Motherland," and that it is an invocation of *Bharatmata*, *i.e.*, Mother India. There is no doubt that while many, accepting the latter meaning, used the phrase quite innocently as an expression of their love of country, it also came to be used in an aggressive and turbulent manner in processions and meetings. It became a common practice in certain localities to shout it in an offensive manner at Europeans—the *Firinghis*, as they were now called—much in the same way as "foreign devil" by the Chinese. And in several instances it was so shouted when assaults were committed on Europeans or those who did not fall in with the agitators.

Swaraj.

Another expression which became common was *swaraj*, as a definition of the system of government demanded by the agitators. The meaning of this expression also was open to more than one interpretation. In one case it was held by the High Court that "the word *swaraj* does not necessarily

mean government of the country to the exclusion of the present government, but its ordinary acceptance is 'Home Rule' under the Government. The vernacular word, if literally translated, would mean self-government, but self-government would not necessarily mean the exclusion of the present Government or independence. It may mean, as it is now well understood, government by the people themselves under the King and under British sovereignty." This ruling was given in August 1907; but subsequent events clearly showed that the ideal of a section of the Bengali Hindus was complete independence and subversion of the British rule; and the word was used almost exclusively by that section.

Moderates and Extremists.

Generally speaking, the Bengali Hindus became divided into two classes with different aims. One section called Extremists believed that the Indians should work out their own salvation and attain independence. The other section, known as Moderates, put forward as their aim the attainment of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire. This object was to be pursued by constitutional means, by gradually bringing about a change in the existing system of administration, and by promoting national unity.

Seditious speeches.

In the meantime, the tone of the speeches which various agitators delivered in the public squares in the north of Calcutta became more and more violent and inflammatory. They were known to be seditious; but it was impossible to institute prosecutions with any hope of success, owing to the difficulty of securing satisfactory evidence of the actual words used in each case. Similar speeches in the districts outside Calcutta led to the institution of proceedings under section 108, Criminal Procedure Code, but in only one case was any one bound down to keep the peace; and then the Magistrate's order was set aside by the High Court. After the institution of that case, orders were passed by the Lieutenant-Governor that no further proceedings under the section quoted should be taken without the permission of the Local Government. This order was passed on the analogy of section 196, Criminal Procedure Code, which requires the sanction of the Local Government to be given to prosecutions for sedition. Sir Andrew Fraser felt that there was a great difference between offences of a political nature and ordinary criminal offences, and that it was not the intention of the law that prosecution in connection with the former should be left to the initiative of local officers. They were to be dealt with in accordance with the

general policy of Government and the advice of the law officers of the Crown, and not to depend on the idiosyncracies of individual officers.

The Calcutta riots.

The danger of the inflammatory speeches and writing, which had been freely indulged in by agitators, became apparent in October 1907, when there were serious riots for two nights in Calcutta. These riots arose out of the action of the police in breaking up a meeting in Beadon Square, and led to a wholesale condemnation of the Calcutta Police in the Vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular Press. It was alleged that the meeting was dispersed without any adequate reason, that the police afterwards got entirely out of hand, assaulting innocent passers-by, attacking tram-cars, and looting shops, or at least encouraging or permitting *gundas*, *i.e.*, professional rogues, to loot them. These charges were so serious that the Lieutenant-Governor at once directed the Commissioner of the Presidency Division to enquire into them. This enquiry being in some respects incomplete, His Honour directed a sifting enquiry to be held by an officer specially deputed for the purpose. The result was to establish clearly the facts that the police were justified in breaking up the meeting, that Bengali Hindus of the respectable classes took a prominent part in the disturbances, and that a determined attack was made by them upon the police. Though the latter, as a whole, behaved remarkably well, some of the rank-and-file got out of hand and roughly handled some innocent persons. But the main fact remained that the disturbances took origin in the riotous conduct of a class which is usually orderly and well behaved. His Honour's conclusion was that this was the direct outcome of the violent writing and speaking which had been indulged in for months past by irresponsible agitators. He pointed out the danger attendant on all incitements to race-hatred and violence; and urged the more respectable and law-abiding sections of the community to use their influence, and support the Government in taking suitable measures to preserve the peace.

As it was known that these riots were the direct result of seditious speeches, an application was made to the Chief Presidency Magistrate under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, and an order was obtained authorizing the closure of the squares to meetings for a period of two months. Immediately after the expiry of that period fresh speeches of a similar character were delivered. A second application was therefore made to the Magistrate by the Commissioner of Police, and a fresh order was passed closing the squares

for a further period of two months. Since the expiry of that period few seditious speeches have been delivered in public in Calcutta.

Seditious writings.

For some time past, however, the malcontents had not confined themselves to seditious speeches. Immediately after the announcement of the Partition a seditious pamphlet had been circulated urging the Bengalis to rise *en masse* fearing neither guns nor bayonets, nor—the police! Some of the newspapers also adopted a frankly disloyal tone, and several were started with the express object of spreading a spirit of disaffection, and propagating revolutionary ideas. The Bihari and Uriya papers, and the organs of the Muhammadan community, with two exceptions, continued to be loyal and moderate. But the majority of the Bengali papers, particularly those written in the vernacular, assumed a more violent tone, and some of them openly aimed at the complete subversion of the authority of Government. Of those written in English, two—the *Indian Mirror* and the *Indian Nation*—continued to show sobriety, and to maintain a loyal and moderate attitude. One or two more occasionally gave a sober review of politics, and made genuine suggestions for reform, but also took every opportunity to declaim upon and magnify alleged abuses or acts of injustice. Others were less restrained; and, generally speaking, the most prominent characteristics of the Bengali Press were destructive criticism and open hostility to Government. Among these papers several came into special prominence from their seditious tone; and the *Bande Mataram*, established in 1906, and written in English, consistently advocated *swaraj* in the form of complete independence:—"the absolute right of self-taxation, self-legislation and self-administration for the people of India." Certain vernacular papers went further. They urged the adoption of revolutionary methods as the means of securing complete political independence. Their tone was generally bitter and violent, scurrilous and abusive, and it was uniformly seditious. Their object was to stir up disaffection and incite to acts of violence regardless of consequences. They inculcated a feeling of hatred for the English, and a spirit of aggressive nationalism; and they endeavoured to arouse the religious prejudices and passions of the Hindus.

Press prosecutions.

For some time the violent writing in the newspapers was ignored. It was hoped that their virulence would gradually die away when it became apparent that the Partition was a settled fact, and the feeling of bitterness regarding it wore itself out. This hope was disappointed;

for experience showed that immunity from prosecution merely led to more and more violent writing. The Lieutenant-Governor, at last, reluctantly came to the conclusion that legal proceedings must be taken under section 124A of the Indian Penal Code against the worst of the newspapers. Before this was done, a warning was given, but the warning proved ineffectual. Prosecutions were accordingly instituted against the *Yugantar*, *Bande Mataram*, *Sandhya* and *Navasakti*.

These prosecutions were on the whole successful inasmuch as convictions were obtained and without much excitement; but it cannot be pretended that they succeeded in checking the mischief. The *Yugantar* openly declared that no number of prosecutions would prevent it from publishing inflammatory articles. Those who were convicted were held up to public admiration as martyrs; and a fresh printer was registered after each conviction. This attitude of persistent contumacy and the essential failure of the prosecutions to secure their object were due to inherent defects in the law; for the provisions of the Press and Registration of Books Act (XXV of 1867) required only the printer to be registered. It was not possible to discover the authors of the offending articles, for editors and managers divested themselves of their functions. The only person against whom evidence could be given was the printer, and this was generally some youthful enthusiast, only too glad to assume the role of a patriot and martyr, who was merely a tool used by others who remained in the back ground.

Revolutionary movement.

A further development in the campaign of sedition took place at the end of 1907 and in the first half of 1908. Early in November 1907, two unsuccessful attempts were made between Chandernagore and Mankundu to wreck, by means of explosives, trains in which the Lieutenant-Governor was travelling. A third attempt to blow up His Honour's train was made on the 6th December at Narayangarh in the Midnapore district; but the explosion only caused some slight damage to the engine and line. On the 11th April 1908, a bomb was thrown at M. Tardivel, the *Maire* of Chandernagore, while he was at dinner, but fortunately no damage was done. The *Maire*, it may be explained, had incurred the displeasure of the conspirators by prohibiting some so-called *swadeshi* meetings.

On the night of the 30th April, there was another dastardly outrage at Muzaffarpur. A bomb was thrown into a carriage in which Mrs. and Miss Kennedy, the wife and daughter of an esteemed member of the local Bar, were returning home. It exploded with deadly effect causing

frightful injuries to the two ladies, the younger of whom died within an hour, and the other next morning. One of the murderers was arrested within fourteen hours and was eventually sentenced to death. The other shot himself to escape arrest. They were two young Bengali Hindus, whose object was to kill the District Judge of Muzaffarpur, Mr. D. H. Kingsford, I.C.S., who had till recently been Chief Presidency Magistrate at Calcutta, and in that capacity had convicted several printers of seditious newspapers. They mistook, however, the carriage of Mrs. and Miss Kennedy for that of Mr. Kingsford. It may or may not be a coincidence that the murder was committed on Amabasya night, which is an auspicious night for the worship of Kali. It is, however, noticeable that the murderers had waited twenty days in Muzaffarpur before throwing the bomb; and that some time before a speech had been delivered advocating the sacrifice to Kali of white goats—a thinly veiled allusion to Europeans. As is well known, Kali is the principal goddess worshipped by the Saktas, a prominent sect among Bengali Hindus, and one of their Tantras recommends the sacrifice of human beings as an offering pleasing in her sight. However this may be, it is at least certain that this was the first day of the new (Hindi) year; and it is most probable that the conspirators waited for it in order that the murder might usher in the year.

Scarcely had the news of this outrage been received, when a number of conspirators were arrested in Calcutta. After the attempt to blow up the Lieutenant-Governor's train in Midnapore, the police had been busily investigating clues, and obtained evidence of the existence of a secret society engaged in making bombs and explosives intended for the murder of Europeans. They discovered a regular factory for bomb-making and a number of infernal machines of a very destructive type, varying in size from small assassination bombs to large shells intended for crowds and street-fighting. They were copies of bombs well known in Anarchist history; and in some respects the arrangements for their manufacture were as complete as in a Government explosive factory. It was soon clear that all the bombs had not been seized; for on the 15th May, a bomb, laid on the tram line in Grey Street, Calcutta, and evidently intended for the destruction of a tram car, was exploded by a municipal cart, and injured a few persons close by. Two days later another bomb of great power was found on the steps of St. Andrew's Church in Circular Road, Calcutta, a church chiefly frequented by native Christians.

Enquiry showed that young Bengali Hindus had been incited to these outrages and inspired with a fanatical hatred of Europeans not only by the violent writings in the Bengali newspapers, but also by influences with which they had come in contact in Europe and America. It was found that a conspiracy had been organized with a definite scheme for the assassination of Europeans. There were regular seminaries of sedition and schools for the study of anarchical principles and the preparation of anarchical instruments. Funds were raised by subscription, and were supplemented or sought to be supplemented by dacoities. To deal with this situation, two Acts—the Explosive Substances Act and the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act—were passed in June 1908 by the Governor-General's Council.

The former Act was designed to remedy the inadequacy of the existing law to deal with crimes committed by means of explosive substances, and was framed on the lines of the English Explosive Substances Act, 1883, which was enacted for the express purpose of dealing with anarchist crimes. It provides for the punishment of any person who causes an explosion likely to endanger life or property, or who attempts to cause such an explosion, or makes or has in his possession any explosive substance with intent to endanger life or property. It further makes the manufacture or possession of explosive substances for any other than a lawful object a substantive offence, and it throws on the person who makes or is in possession of any explosive substance the onus of proving that the making or possession is lawful. It also provides adequately for the punishment both of principals and accessories.

The latter Act was passed expressly because of the close connexion which had been shown to exist between the perpetrators of criminal outrages and the newspapers which published criminal incitements; and because experience had shown that prosecution under the existing law was inadequate to prevent the publication of such incitements. Its scope is confined to incitements to murder, to offences under the Explosive Substances Act, and to acts of violence. It gives power in such cases to confiscate the printing press used in the production of the newspaper, and to stop the lawful issue of the newspaper. In this Act a newspaper was defined as "any periodical work containing public news or comments on public news." It was soon clear that this definition afforded a loophole to the conspirators; for within a fortnight after the Act was passed, a leaflet was published in Calcutta bearing the name of a newspaper which had been most virulent and most prominent in the campaign of sedition. This leaflet contained passages

inciting to wholesale murder and assassination, and gave instructions as to the manufacture of explosives.

Another bomb outrage occurred on the 22nd June, when a bomb was thrown at Kankinara on the Eastern Bengal State Railway into a railway carriage in which three European mill assistants were travelling. Two of them were slightly injured, and the third seriously, one arm being so shattered that it had to be amputated. On the 12th August, on the day after the execution of the murderer of Mrs. and Miss Kennedy, a bomb was thrown at a train on the Eastern Bengal State Railway between Shamnagar and Kankinara, but fell short and burst harmlessly. Two more exploded on the East Indian Railway near Chandernagore, where they were found by some railway workmen.

Two bombs were also discovered at Midnapore, which had for some time been notorious as a centre of the extremists, and evidence was obtained of a conspiracy to murder European officials there. On the 31st August two of the prisoners under trial in connection with the conspiracy in Calcutta murdered the approver in the Alipore jail. In November the Chief Presidency Magistrate passed orders under the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act confiscating the printing press of the *Bande Mataram*, holding that an article commenting on this murder was an incitement to murder or other acts of violence.

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that so far as Bengal is concerned the agitation has been practically confined to Calcutta and to the Presidency and Burdwan Divisions, *i.e.*, to Lower Bengal proper. In Bihar, Chota Nagpur and Orissa it was noticeable only in places where there were Bengali Hindu settlements; and it may be added that in these large sub-Provinces there is no love lost between the native, whether Hindu, Muhammadan, or Animist, and the Bengali immigrant. Calcutta was the centre of the agitation. It was from Calcutta that the leaders of the agitation took their clue, and in most places where it had any strength, it was kept up by visits from Bengali agitators. It was moreover confined to Bengali Hindus, to retain whose adherence appeals to religious sentiment were constantly made. Though individual Muhammadans—some of them, it is believed, paid agents—joined in the agitation, they were not representative of the Islamic community, which almost to a man kept aloof from and condemned the agitation.

It is not at present possible to give an account of the policy pursued by Sir Andrew Fraser in dealing with the movements, briefly sketched above. The measures of which he urged the adoption, in order to put a stop to seditious

propaganda, have formed the subject of prolonged discussion with the Government of India, the nature of which it is not permissible to disclose. It may, however, be stated generally that the main features of the line of policy which commended itself to His Honour were:—(1) a conciliatory policy towards all who are well affected and a consistent endeavour to remove all genuine grievances; and (2) the rigorous repression of all outward manifestations of disloyalty. To quote from a reply made by His Honour in July 1908 to an assurance of loyalty on the part of an influential body of Bengali Hindus:—"There is no intention on the part of Government to make concessions to disorder; but there is a determination not to allow the crimes of a few to divert it from its policy of just and progressive administration. For my own part, I feel that the police must be called on to take special precautions for the prevention of crimes contemplated by a certain section of the community, and that every effort must be made by the Government, in the interests of sound administration and in the interests of the people themselves, to crush and punish these efforts to disturb the public peace and to incite to, or to commit, acts of lawlessness and wicked violence. But, at the same time, I cannot admit that my opinion of, or my regard for, the people of India, as a whole, has undergone any very serious change from the events which have occurred. I do not attribute these events to the people generally; and I decline to condemn the whole population for the crimes of a few."

INDUSTRIAL UNREST.

The political agitation, of which a sketch is given above, played also a large part in the industrial unrest which was a marked feature of the quinquennium. That industrial unrest found expression in a series of strikes affecting the most important industries of Bengal. In many of the strikes professional agitators were prominent, and the power of organization which was so apparent in the political agitation was equally noticeable. Both were new factors in the industrial history of the Province. The industrial agitators were mostly briefless Bengali Hindu barristers, who made it their business to found and preside over Unions, and by that means to lay down the law as to the terms on which masters and men are to work together. Such Unions were formed for Indian press employés, mill-hands and railway servants; strikes were started or encouraged; and the strikers were backed up as long as their funds lasted.

There can be little doubt that their object was not to promote the interest of employés, but, by fomenting imaginary grievances, to create a widespread spirit of disaffection against European superiors in the world of industry, just as political agitators sought to stir up a spirit of revolt against the constituted authorities of Government. This however was only one factor. In some cases strikes appear to have been due to the unrest caused among a large body of labourers by hearing of strikes elsewhere, at a time when their resources were strained by the high prices prevalent. In other cases the strikes were mainly due to economic causes; and in others to grievances caused by changes in the system of work.

In the mills, in particular, strikes were due to a number of different causes and to peculiar circumstances, the nature of which it is often difficult to understand. To quote from the Report of the Factory Labour Commission recently published:—"One of the main difficulties experienced at present, when unrest appears among the workers, is in ascertaining the causes of that unrest. Frequently no definite demands are formulated, no grievances are stated, no indication is given as to the cause of the discontent; the operatives simply leave work in a body, or more commonly they drop off one by one without explanation, and accept employment under more congenial conditions in other factories." The strikes among mill-hands have, however, so far not been general. "While the operatives fully understand the machinery of local strikes, and have repeatedly forced employers to comply with their demands in isolated cases, they are as yet unable to combine over any large area with the object of securing a common end by concerted action." The following brief account of some of the strikes will serve to show what varied influences were at work.

In 1905 perhaps the most noticeable strikes were those which took place among the printers and compositors in the printing presses of the Government of India and the Bengal Secretariat in September and October. The first strike occurred in September and was due to certain grievances regarding the conditions of work, aided and inflamed by the excited state of Bengali Hindus at the time. It is needless perhaps to say that if there had been no discontent about the method of work, there would have been no strike. But it is equally true that the discontent would not have produced a strike but for the public excitement and the intervention of Bengali Hindu agitators. For instance, it may be mentioned that on the day when the strike in the Bengal Press started, two notices were posted.

One began with the invocation "Hail Mother," and gave a warning that any man who failed to attend a meeting of the compositors of the Government of India press would be under the curse of having killed a thousand Brahmans. The other interdicted the use of foreign articles, directed that 10 hand-bills of the same tenor should be distributed by the reader, and said that otherwise he would draw on his head the curse of 100,000 Brahmans. The alleged grievances were of no urgency, and none justified the strikers in attempting to force the hand of Government by a strike. The second strike, which took place in October 1905, was equally wanton and unprovoked; and during this strike also agitators availed themselves of the opportunity to stir up discontent and embitter the relations between the British employer and the Indian employé. The inconvenience caused by these strikes was great. Sir Andrew Fraser consequently made arrangements to get as much of the Government printing done in jails as will enable it to print all very urgent matters in the event of a strike in the Press.

The Government press strikes were followed by a number of strikes in private concerns. Six private presses in Calcutta were inconvenienced by their men going out temporarily, and there was an epidemic of strikes outside Calcutta. The first was a strike of the clerks and Indian assistants in some large iron works at Howrah. The ostensible cause was their dislike of a machine for registering attendance, but enquiry showed that the strike was directly organized by political agitators and that the strikers were supported from funds raised by them. It was only when those funds were exhausted that work was resumed. Next there were three strikes of workmen in a jute mill in the Howrah district, in which the operatives were mostly Bengalis, and not up-countrymen as in other mills. The first strike arose out of the objection taken by the mill authorities to the insubordinate behaviour of their workmen in connection with the political agitation. When this had been settled, the workmen were insolent, coming up to the European assistants with shouts of *Bande Mataram* and then running away. The second strike followed the seizure of two men out of a gang of 200 who were provoking the assistants in this way. Next year there was another strike in the same mill owing to the introduction of a system by which operatives worked from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M., instead of by electric light at night. However little real sympathy may have been felt for this grievance, the strikers were backed by influential persons in Calcutta connected with the political agitation. Another

strike at a jute mill at Serampore, in July 1906, was due apparently to measures taken by the Manager to ensure punctuality in attendance and to punish late-comers. In a mill at Naihati, again, the workmen struck in October 1905 because an European assistant, in trying to shoot a dog, accidentally injured two of the operatives. Next year the strikes of mill-hands were even more numerous, occurring at the Hastings, Clive, Wellington, Arathoon, Soorah, Bengal Cotton and Upper Hooghly Mills.

The railways also began to be affected in 1906. In July two strikes of native workmen of the Traffic Department of the East Indian Railway occurred on the Loop Line and in the Dinapore district, which were instigated and engineered by disaffected Calcutta agitators. They were soon brought to a satisfactory termination by the prompt action of the railway authorities; but they were followed by a far more serious strike. The political agitation had been revived as a counterblast to Mr. (now Lord) Morley's declaration that he regarded the Partition as a settled fact; and on the 21st July, the day after a large protest meeting held in Calcutta, the Indian employés of the East Indian Railway from Howrah to Bandel struck. Failing in their attempts to coerce the Company into granting the extravagant demands made by them on behalf of the strikers, the agitators began work at railway centres up the line. Week after week, first at one centre and then at another, the Indian railway employés were urged to join the Union already started and to co-operate with their brethren in the Howrah district in forcing the Company to accede to their demands. The strike spread to Asansol and the adjoining stations, where most of the clerks of the Traffic and Locomotive Departments struck work. Their ostensible grievance was that the Howrah strikers had not been reinstated by the Company, but the real reason appears to have been the influence of Calcutta agitators. The latter were equally successful at Jamalpur, where the Bihari workmen were practically forced or tricked into opposition to the Company, and appear to have had no grievances to put forward. The agitators, however, played upon their feelings, reminding them that they numbered 14,000, and that their power would be irresistible if they joined the strikers. Finally, at the end of August, 10,000 workmen broke out, on being refused permission to attend a meeting; and the European mechanics were obliged to fire on them in self-defence. After this, things quieted down, and the workmen, who felt the high prices prevailing, were only too glad to return to work. No

grievances were formulated, but the proceedings led eventually to some improvement in the arrangements for working overtime and to the grant of compensation for the dearness of food. About the same time too there was a strike in the workshops of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway at Kharagpur, which was not organized by agitators, but was believed to be due to the example of the strikes already set on foot by them and to inflammatory articles in vernacular papers.

So far with the exception of a strike of short duration which occurred in 1905 among the guards of the East Indian Railway, the strikes had been confined to Indian employés. But in November 1907 there was a strike among the European and Eurasian guards and drivers of that railway, who had been for some time discontented with their pay, prospects and conditions of work. The strike was carried out with practical unanimity and great promptitude, and took the authorities by surprise. It extended over the whole line, but the headquarters of the strikers were at Asansol. Traffic was practically at a standstill throughout the system, but the greatest congestion of traffic took place at that station, where the strikers took possession of the engine sheds and held up no less than eleven passenger trains with about 150 European and 5,000 Indian passengers. The passengers were eventually sent to their destinations through the Bengal-Nagpur Railway system, the authorities of which made arrangements to run special trains. The strike lasted from the 19th November to the 28th November, and came to a close largely through the intervention of Sir Charles Allen, Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation, Mr. Dumayne, Vice-Chairman of the Calcutta Port Trust, and Mr. Monteith, a representative of a leading Calcutta firm, who went to Asansol on the third day of the strike in order to effect a conciliation. A settlement was eventually made on the understanding that the grievances of the strikers would be submitted to a Board of Conciliation to be appointed by Government.

This serious strike led to others. On the 24th November a number of guards of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway also went out on strike, apparently out of sympathy with the strikers on the East Indian Railway, but were soon induced by the railway authorities to resume work. The pointsmen at Chakradharpur also struck, but the firmness of the authorities and the dismissal of the ring-leaders brought the strike to a speedy termination. Besides this, there was a strike in the Bengal and North-Western Railway workshops at Samastipur. It subsided, however, within a week. Next

month (on the 7th December) a strike occurred among the Indian drivers and firemen on the Eastern Bengal State Railway. Goods trains were cancelled; and a number of European and Eurasian drivers being thus set free, and European soldier drivers being brought in, the majority of the trains were kept running. Seeing this, the strikers expressed their willingness to return.

In 1908 the most important strikes occurred in the Telegraph Department. The first occurred at the end of February among the telegraph delivery peons in Calcutta, who demanded higher wages. They were joined in a few days even by the boy peons; but the strike was a small affair, in spite of the strikers' cause being advocated by Bengali Hindu outsiders. In April the telegraph signallers struck work in a body. There had for some time been discontent among them; and during the railway strike in November 1907 they had slowed down work on the plea that they wanted some definite assurance that their claims and demands for increased pay would receive early attention. The strike, however, was not due to the question of pay, but to the introduction of a new system of work, which was designed to lessen the burden of night work, and also to accelerate the despatch of messages by adjusting the number of the staff on duty to the traffic at each period of the day:—in other words, to secure quicker, better organized, and more regular work. The new system was introduced on 1st April and was bitterly resented by the signallers. They first adopted a policy of passive resistance, their tactics being to work slowly and so delay traffic. By the 3rd there was such congestion, that the transmission of deferred messages was stopped, and business was paralyzed in the gunny and jute. trades On the 7th the Bengal Chamber of Commerce represented that business was practically suspended, and strongly urged the appointment of a Board of Conciliation to deal with the whole question. On the 8th the Director-General of Telegraphs issued a notice that, because of wilful delay and obstruction to traffic in Calcutta and other central offices, the Superintendents concerned were authorized to dismiss summarily 10 per cent. of the staff. Next day the signallers in Calcutta struck, and there was a general strike over the system. On the 15th April the Viceroy accepted the recommendation of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that a definite period (settled later at five weeks) should be fixed for the trial of the new system and that a representative Committee should watch its working. Also on the same day the men in the Calcutta Central Telegraph

Office were informed that an improved scale of pay for signallers would take effect from the 12th July. Within a few days after the issue of these orders the strike was at an end.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.

During Sir Andrew's administration the Province was fortunate in not having to bear the brunt of famine, except in Darbhanga during 1907 and in some small scattered tracts in 1908. But in the closing years of the quinquennium there was scarcity in some parts, and certain sections of the community suffered from the high price of food. While the average price of food varied little from the normal during the six years 1900 to 1905, it suddenly rose in 1906 in a very remarkable manner, this rise becoming accentuated in 1907 till in August the average price of rice was 58 per cent. and of maize 70 per cent. above the previous normal. The crops of 1907-08 being also short, there has been no appreciable reduction in the price of these cereals, the first of which is the great food staple of the Province, while the latter is consumed largely in Bihar. This extraordinary rise in the prices of food grains has not been confined to this Province and cannot be ascribed to any single cause. Prices have risen all over India; and the rapidity of the rise has attracted attention in other Provinces as well as in Bengal. It is obvious that with the present facilities of intercommunication between all parts of the country, a general rise of prices in other Provinces must inevitably lead to a corresponding rise in this Province. But special enquiry has shown that in Bengal several causes combined to produce this effect.

In the first place, the outturn of the harvests of food grains in general and of rice in particular was poor in four successive years (1904-07). At the same time, there was a rapid rise in the price of jute. Indeed, it is estimated that at least 40 crores were paid in Bengal and Eastern Bengal for the crop of one year (1906), and that of this sum 15½ crores were clear profit. A large proportion of the population were thus enabled to raise their standard of living, to purchase more of the food they relish most, (*e.g.*, rice and fish), and to pay more for such food. The result of deficiency in the staple food grain of the people, combined with an enormous increase in the buying power of a large proportion, was that an unprecedented demand arose for rice,

prices went up accordingly, and large quantities of rice were exported. The exceptionally high prices, further, induced those who had stores of rice to sell whatever they could, keeping only the minimum required to carry them on till the next harvest. Another important factor has been a general rise in the standard of living all over the Province. Of this there is abundant evidence in many directions. Many things which were formerly regarded as luxuries are now treated as articles of ordinary and every-day use even by the peasantry. Not the least significant change is the way in which rice is displacing coarser grains as a daily food. Formerly in many rural tracts of Bihar and Chota Nagpur the lowest classes seldom had a meal of rice, but what with migration to the tea districts and the mills, the advent of railways and the spread of intercommunication between all parts of the Province, even these classes are known to be taking to eating rice.

Last, but perhaps not least, the greatly increased facilities in communication by rail enable the big dealers and merchants to control a larger proportion of the grain trade of the country. Much of the grain trade, which used to be carried on locally between the actual cultivators, middlemen and grain dealers in the local mofussil bazars, and which used not to go beyond those parties, has now come under the control of large capitalists at more important centres. Agents of such capitalists and of Calcutta firms now penetrate into rural tracts where they were unheard of 10 or 20 years ago, and buy up surplus stocks of grain before even the dealers in the nearest towns can make a bid. The influence, moreover, of large transactions in grain must necessarily now spread further and more rapidly than before. Modern conditions, in fact, tend more and more to form a world-wide market—to expose the grain markets of this country to international influences; and this phase of the economic development of the country has no doubt largely contributed to a general rise in the price of food grains. These considerations, moreover, seem to lead to the conclusion that the rise must to some degree be permanent.

Generally speaking, the economic changes sketched above have been favourable to the cultivating classes, who in Bengal form the vast majority of the population. Though landless field labourers are no better off, the labouring classes, as a whole, have benefited from the growing demand for labour, which has been created by the expansion of the coal trade, the increase in the number of factories, and the establishment of new industries. But it is different with those who have

to depend entirely on small fixed salaries in clerical and professional employment. They do not reduce their expenditure on social and religious ceremonies incidental to their position, though the expense of maintaining that position has increased; while their ranks are swelled, and competition is rendered keener year after year, by the growing number of recruits from school and university. Debarred by custom and tradition from other means of livelihood, with prices rising, and the purchasing power of the rupee declining, the struggle for existence in this section of the community has grown harder; and in many cases they find it difficult to make ends meet. This has been recognized by Government, which, in order to alleviate distress among ministerial officers and menial servants on low pay, has granted compensation to all such of its employés as draw pay of Rs. 30 or less a month. These charges entailed an expenditure of 9½ lakhs in 1907-08, and 8½ lakhs had to be provided in the Budget for 1908-09.

One of the results of the hard times which the poorer members of the educated classes have had to face—and a large proportion of them are poor—has been a discontented feeling. This smouldering discontent has been fanned by wild charges made against the system of British administration, such as overtaxation, the draining of the resources of the country by its rulers, etc. Consequently, high prices have had indirectly a share in the political unrest which has prevailed.

The rise in the cost of living has also rendered it necessary to revise the rates of diet allowance for complainants and witnesses in the Courts. They were prescribed nearly 35 years ago, and with the lapse of years had become inadequate. The rules were therefore revised in 1907 so as to allow of more liberal rates, the increased cost being met by the State. Further measures for improving the pay and prospects of clerks in the employment of Government are in contemplation. The Government of India having made an assignment of four lakhs of rupees to be devoted to this purpose, temporary arrangements were sanctioned in 1905 for improving the pay of the establishment in Judicial Courts, and in the offices of Commissioners, District Officers and Subdivisional Officers. The object of these concessions was to afford immediate and substantial relief; and they were sanctioned as an *ad interim* measure, pending a thorough examination of the whole question by a special Committee. A Committee, known as the Ministerial Officers' Salaries Committee, was accordingly appointed in 1905; and as a result of their enquiries a comprehensive scheme has been drawn up for improving the pay and prospects of ministerial officers in

both executive and judicial offices. The scheme is under the consideration of the Government of India, and it is not therefore possible to give details; but it may be stated that it is intended to provide for each district a staff that will not only be adequate, in point of numbers, for the work to be performed, but will also be adequately paid.

FAMINE.

Until the closing years of Sir Andrew Fraser's administration the Province remained immune from famine. In 1906-07 however there was considerable distress in North Bihar owing to the destruction of crops by heavy floods. In Darbhanga the distress affected an area of about 1,690 square miles, or one-half of the district, with a population of nearly 1½ million, and here distress culminated in famine. In the middle of July 1906 the rivers overflowed their banks, causing considerable damage to the crops. The first flood had scarcely subsided, when it was followed by another of unprecedented height and duration. Almost the whole area was submerged for about a fortnight. The *bhadoi* crop was thus destroyed, and the paddy seedlings were swept away. By the time the water had subsided, it was too late to plant out fresh seedlings, except in the Madhubani subdivision, where the crop suffered greatly from the subsequent drought. The harvests of 1905-06, moreover, had been poor; and it was estimated that, on the whole, the total yield was only two-thirds of the normal. In 1906-07, owing to the floods, the *bhadoi* crop yielded only 12 per cent. of the normal, and the winter rice only 27 per cent. *Rabi* crops were sown over a larger area than usual, but the prolonged drought which followed the floods, and the heavy rainfall at harvest time, reduced the yield to barely half the average. The total outturn of crops for the year is estimated to have been hardly one-third of the normal. The result was widespread scarcity; but it was acute enough to necessitate the declaration of famine only in five thanas.

The immediate result of the floods was to stop all demand for labour and to bring the labouring classes almost to the verge of starvation. It was impossible, till the floods subsided, to organize relief work. All that could be done was to send out parties in boats, supplied with grain and cash, and to give doles to starving persons in the

submerged villages. As communications improved, kitchens were opened in the areas in which acute distress prevailed; and by the middle of September, the floods had subsided sufficiently to enable test works to be opened. The daily attendance on these works grew steadily until, at the end of November, it was 56,880. Meanwhile, the Lieutenant-Governor had visited the district and toured through the affected tracts. During this tour final arrangements were made for the conduct of famine relief operations. The famine continued till August 1907, when a bumper *bhadoi* crop brought the distress to a close. From beginning to end, 13,123,151 units were relieved, viz., 6,577,791 on works and 6,545,360 by gratuitous relief. Sir Andrew paid, in all, three visits to the distressed area, and obtained personal evidence of the eminently successful and energetic manner in which the relief operations were carried on by the Collector, Mr. W. Egerton, I.C.S.

Scarcity followed next year in some parts of the Province owing to the failure of the winter rains. During the early part of the season, the rainfall was favourable, and the *bhadoi* crop was, in most districts, a very good one. Except in parts of Orissa, where damage was done by floods, the prospects of winter rice were also very favourable until the end of September 1907. The rainfall in October, however, failed altogether in many districts, while in others, it was seriously in defect. The result was a serious shortage in the outturn of winter rice, while the situation was complicated by the abnormally high price of food-grains. Distress was particularly felt in some parts of Orissa, which suffered not only from deficient rainfall in October, but also from floods, which affected an area containing a population of more than 400,000 persons. In many parts of this area, fresh seedlings were planted out when the floods subsided, and there was every prospect of their doing well till the end of September, when the rain ceased and the seedlings withered away. In areas not affected by the floods, the crops did exceedingly well in low lands and places where irrigation was possible; but on the higher lands the outturn was very poor.

Taking the Province as a whole, actual distress was confined to a comparatively small area and relief operations were called for on a restricted scale. Famine relief works had to be started in Ranchi, but it was found possible to close them at the end of September. By the close of that month gratuitous relief was being given to 21,500 persons, of whom 17,700 were in Orissa, where the men emigrated from the affected

tract to a much greater extent than usual, in many cases leaving their families without means of support. Test works were opened in seven districts, but were attended by comparatively few persons, the reason apparently being that many of the men, who on previous occasions would have sought employment on test works, now emigrate instead to Calcutta and other labour centres, where they can obtain employment on more profitable terms than on test or relief works. The labouring classes are, in fact, less affected than they would have been 20 or even 10 years ago. On the other hand, owing to the high prices prevailing for some time past, the pinch of scarcity is felt by the poorer *bhadralok*, or people of good caste who depend for their support on small fixed wages.

At the close of the rains of 1908 serious apprehensions were felt for some parts of North Bihar, where the rainfal had been very deficient. As a preliminary measure, the Government of India sanctioned a grant of 12 lakhs for the advance of *takkavi* loans to cultivators.

FINANCE.

The most important event in the financial history of the Province during the quinquennium of Sir Andrew Fraser's administration was the financial settlement concluded in 1904, which marked a great advance in decentralization. Before that year there had been a series of settlements of five years; and this meant that at the end of every five years the expenditure was cut down, and income was allotted sufficient to cover the expenditure on the revised scale. The position of the Local Government in each case depended upon the extent to which it had been cut down, and upon its recuperative power, *i.e.*, upon the extent to which its new income was made up of expanding revenue. One drawback of this system was that as the period for which the Local Government was free to enjoy the fruits of its economy, or of the successful nursing of its revenue, was limited to five years—or more correctly, to the last two or three years of the term of the settlement, for during the earlier years it had usually but a small surplus to spend—it was under constant temptation to spend its money not to the best advantage, but on such improvements as could be carried through before the close of the settlement, in order to leave as small a surplus as possible of the assigned revenue for resumption at the impending revision.

On the other hand, the Government of India were no more willing to allow the Local Government to undertake recurring expenditure than if no financial settlements had existed. The reason of this was that at the end of five years it was practically impossible for the Government of India to cut down recurring expenditure, for which the Local Government had made itself liable. Consequently, at the end of five years, the liability for the new expenditure had to be allowed for in the new settlement, and practically it was passed on to the Government of India. On the other hand, they appropriated any recurring income created by the Local Government. Thus, an ordinary remunerative investment had no attractions for a Local Government, because at the end of the five years the revenues would be taken into account in the new settlement. For example, if the Local Government built houses for its officers, the rent received would, when a new settlement was concluded at the end of the five years, be counted as part of the resources made over to it for the purpose of meeting the expenditure under that new settlement.

The difficulty was to devise a scheme which should be permanent, but which should not involve unfairness, or risk of unfairness after a lapse of five years, to the Government of India or to the Local Government. To this problem a curiously simple solution was found. It was decided that the new settlement should be neither for five years nor should it be permanent, but that it should last for an indefinite period, and be subject to revision, if over a long period of years it was found to be unfair to one side or the other. Another principle laid down was that, when heads of revenue or expenditure were divided, the Local Government should have the same share both of the revenue and of the expenditure under the same head. It got the whole of the receipts under registration, one-half of those under stamps, seven-sixteenths of those under excise and one-fourth of those under assessed taxes and forests; and it bore the same proportion of expenditure in each case. This principle was, however, departed from in the case of land revenue, the expenditure on which was made wholly Provincial (except in the cases of large surveys and settements, which were made wholly Imperial), although the Local Government got only one-fourth of the receipts. At the same time, as the proportion of expanding revenue had been cut down, and as the Local Government would not benefit from the absence of revision until the expiry of five years (when the revision would otherwise have taken place), the Government of India made it a grant of a lump sum of 50 lakhs

on condition that its expenditure was to be spread over several years. The Local Government was thus able to enter on the new settlement without disadvantage.

Subsequently, in 1906, a new settlement was concluded in consequence of the transfer of a number of districts to the new Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. By this settlement the position of the Local Government was improved. As explained above, when making a financial settlement the Government of India scrutinize the estimates, decide what total expenditure may fairly be taken as the necessary expenditure of the Province, and make over receipts sufficient just to meet that expenditure. On previous occasions the revised estimates were made the basis of the scale of expenditure, but all non-recurring expenditure included in the estimate was eliminated before the scale was calculated. The new settlement, however, was based on the budget estimates for 1905-06, except in regard to Public Works. It was therefore more favourable to the Local Government, inasmuch as the Government of India practically treated about 4½ lakhs of non-recurring expenditure included in the budget as though it were recurring, and made over recurring revenue to meet it. They also left the Public Works grant as settled in the last contract untouched, although the separation of Eastern Bengal relieved the Local Government of charges amounting to Rs. 5,22,000. Still the assignment for Public Works was much below the average expenditure in the past, and its smallness was keenly felt after the depletion of the accumulated balance of earlier years. The Local Government was also allowed a larger share of the divided heads of revenue. In other words, a larger proportion of the revenue made over to it was expanding revenue, and the non-expanding assignment was reduced from Rs. 73,70,000 to Rs. 5,72,000. The following were the changes made:— The Local Government received one-half instead of seven-sixteenths of excise receipts, one-half instead of one-fourth of the income from forests, one-half instead of one-fourth of assessed taxes, the whole instead of one-fourth of the receipts from Government estates, and one-half instead of one-fourth of the remainder of land revenue.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

The Board of Revenue.

One of the first measures taken by Sir Andrew Fraser to improve the machinery of general administration was to

inaugurate a system by which the Members of the Board of Revenue were brought into closer association with the Lieutenant-Governor. He soon realized that the Members of the Board, while exercising important powers in revenue and other matters, had not that close connection with general administration for which they were qualified by their seniority, experience and capacity. Not only so, but there was much unnecessary correspondence between the Board and the Secretariat. It is unnecessary to give details of the scheme introduced by His Honour to remedy this state of affairs. It will be sufficient to state that it involved no organic and constitutional change, and to mention briefly its beneficial results. It has brought the Board into much closer touch with Government. It has prevented misunderstanding. And it has certainly reduced correspondence and expedited work. To the Lieutenant-Governor it has proved of great advantage to have two officers of wide experience, selected for their capacity and judgment, at hand to advise him when he requires their advice. There are now few questions of importance in any branch of administration in which the Members are not consulted by the Lieutenant-Governor. They constantly render valuable help in the work of Government; and their position as colleagues and advisors of the Lieutenant-Governor is a valuable feature in the administration, as the system is now worked.

Commissioners.

Sir Andrew also did much to strengthen the position of Commissioners. Soon after his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor, he introduced a system of placing allotments at the disposal of Commissioners of Divisions from which they might make grants on the spot for purposes of a public nature, or to remedy small defects brought to their notice at time of inspection, thereby avoiding much correspondence and delay. During each of the last three years, each Commissioner has received an average allotment of about Rs. 10,000 for the above purpose. This measure has worked very satisfactorily. It has reduced correspondence regarding small matters, and it has added to the prestige of the Commissioners. Much has also been done in a practical way to effect a certain measure of decentralization by delegating to Commissioners and also to Heads of Departments a number of functions previously exercised by Government or by the Board of Revenue and by giving them fuller financial powers.

Another matter to which Sir Andrew gave his attention was the position of the Commissioner in relation to matters not falling within his official duties as defined by law and rule. This question was referred to a Conference, at which

all the Commissioners and Heads of Departments, and some senior judicial officers, were present. It was unanimously agreed that as the senior officer in his Division, the Commissioner must be regarded as responsible for doing all he can to ensure that public business is conducted with efficiency and without friction, the Heads of Departments being consulted in all important matters: this, indeed, has been the view generally accepted in the past by officers serving in Bengal. And they were unanimously of opinion that the Commissioner's position, responsibility and authority ought to be maintained, and that in social matters he must be looked upon as the Head of the Division. As regards judicial officers, however, the Conference held that the executive must avoid any attempt at, or appearance of, interference with a Judge's work, except through the High Court. Their view was that, while in social matters the Commissioner, as Head of the Division, occupies towards judicial officers the same position as towards officers of the other Departments, he does not occupy this position towards the Judges in matters connected with their judicial work, in respect of which they are under the High Court alone. These views were approved by the Lieutenant-Governor and accepted by the High Court.

Orders were accordingly issued that the Commissioner of Division, as a senior officer and as an officer selected from amongst his fellows on account of his special capacity for high office, should himself deal with social questions, such as cases of personal misconduct, quarrels between officers, improper treatment of the people and the like, and that such questions should only be referred to the head of the Government when, owing to recalcitrancy of one of the parties, it was impossible to settle it on the spot. It was distinctly pointed out that the greatest care must be taken in the case of judicial officers that there should be no sort of interference in regard to their judicial work. The orders aimed at a suitable settlement of social questions by an officer of standing on the spot; but distinct exception was made in respect of judicial officers in regard to their judicial work, lest there should be any appearance of interference with the judicial by the executive.

Commissioners' Conferences.

Another measure introduced by Sir Andrew Fraser in order to bring Commissioners into closer association with the Government, as well as with the Heads of Departments and with one another, was the institution of annual conferences. It scarcely needs demonstration that, unless the officers at the headquarters of Government occasionally meet Commissioners

of Divisions and discuss administrative arrangements and proposed reforms with them, there is a tendency for these two branches of the administration to drift apart and get out of touch. On the one side, there is a tendency in the Secretariat to deal with references made by local officers in a somewhat narrow and unsympathetic manner; and, on the other hand, there is a tendency on the part of the local officers to think that their recommendations are not treated with sufficient consideration at headquarters. In order to prevent such cleavage, Sir Andrew Fraser, when he was Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, introduced a system of annual conferences which were attended by the Commissioners, Secretaries to Government and Heads of Departments. At these conferences, all administrative measures of general importance were discussed; and the results were so satisfactory that, when he came to Bengal as Lieutenant-Governor, he decided to introduce the same system in this Province. Conferences have accordingly been held annually at Darjeeling towards the close of the rainy season, attended by the Commissioners and some representatives of the Judicial Branch of the Service, by the Government Secretaries and by the Heads of Departments interested in the subjects discussed. Selected non-official gentlemen have also been invited to attend the conferences for the discussion of such questions as could usefully be referred to them.

At these conferences, many important questions have been discussed and threshed out, with the result that numerous improvements have been effected in different branches of the administration. Amongst other matters, they have given an impetus to decentralization; and powers have been delegated to Commissioners and other local officers, thereby avoiding the necessity for many references to higher authority and much needless correspondence. There can be no doubt that these annual conferences have been of the greatest benefit, not only because they have greatly reduced correspondence and yet ensured a more thorough examination of the measures which were discussed at them, but, also, because they have brought the headquarters administration and the local officers much more closely into touch. It has, in short, been made clear that frank conference promotes good feeling. Apart, too, from the matters dealt with in conference, the opportunity has been taken to consult personally individual Commissioners regarding important pending matters affecting their Divisions. With the cordial consent of the Commissioners, who recognised the great value of the Provincial Conferences, the same

system has been extended to the Divisions, each Commissioner presiding at an annual conference of all his Collectors.

Heads of Departments.

To such personal discussion great value was attached by Sir Andrew Fraser, who made constant use of it to establish closer relations between Heads of Departments and the Government. As regards his own relations with such officers, he made it a point to be accessible to them. They were encouraged to come and see him, and discuss with him personally important questions affecting the Departments of which they are in charge. As regards official correspondence, there was a tendency for proposals sent up by them to be examined at length in the Secretariat, noted on, adversely criticized, and either negatived altogether or sent back for further consideration, without personal communication between the Head of the Department and the Secretary dealing with the case. The system was apt to cause delay and involve misunderstanding. This was avoided by frequent personal discussion and conference between Heads of Departments, Secretaries and other persons with special knowledge of the subject. In all cases, however, it was clearly understood that such personal discussion does not supersede, or render unnecessary, a regular official reference through the ordinary channel.

Co-operation of branches of the public service.

As regards the different branches of the public service, His Honour did his best to counteract the growing tendency towards "departmentalism." This is, no doubt, a natural result of administrative development and a desire for greater efficiency and uniformity in special branches of Government. But the result has frequently been to dissociate the work of special departments from the control of the local officers, and also to establish separate staffs in each district who do not always realize the importance of working in concord. His Honour did his best to improve this state of affairs by establishing friendly relations between different branches of the public service. The measures which he took to remove friction and introduce co-operation and mutual assistance are referred to elsewhere, and need not be mentioned here.

Relations with non-officials.

In his relations with non-officials Sir Andrew endeavoured to give no ground for the complaint often made against the system of British administration that, however well-meaning its measures may be, they are carried out without any adequate attempt to ascertain the trend of educated Indian opinion. His Honour was careful to avoid this mistake, and made a point of consulting Indian gentlemen of standing and experience regarding important measures contemplated by him. In addition to numerous informal

consultations, many conferences were held which were attended by Indian members of Council and other gentlemen of position regarding the following, among other, subjects:—the establishment of Advisory Councils; the enlargement of Legislative Councils; the revision of the system of village self-government; the introduction of an Irrigation Bill; the amendment of section 147, Criminal Procedure Code, of the Bengal Tenancy Act, and of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act; the measures to be taken for the social evil in Calcutta; the revision of the system of election to District Boards, etc.

The same policy was also pursued in regard to non-official members of the Bengal Council. From the first Sir Andrew made clear his readiness to receive and consider their suggestions. In his first speech on the Budget he gave them an assurance that:—"From the more important suggestions which have been made down to the very smallest which have been made, none will escape notice or fail to receive due attention." He also attached great importance to frankness of interpellation, and allowed members as much freedom as possible in their exercise of this right. He even went so far as to adopt the device of announcing purely formal business, so that there might be a meeting of Council at which they might exercise it; for the law as it stands does not allow a meeting solely for the purpose of interpellations. Sir Andrew further put as little restriction as possible upon the speeches of members in the Budget debate, which, as is well known, is regarded as an opportunity to review the whole administration of the year. He welcomed frank discussion of administrative measures and questions of general policy at this debate, and expressed his conviction that:—"It is desirable that members should have the opportunity of placing clearly before Government and the public, anything that they wish to say in the way of criticism, suggestion or advice, in regard to the income, expenditure and general administration of the Province."

Lastly, Sir Andrew introduced an important change by allowing non-official members to assist in the preparation of the Budget. Selected members of Council have for the last two years been invited to attend an informal discussion of the Budget before it is finally settled. Under the old system, the discussion of the Budget in Council was necessarily infructuous, so far as the Budget for that particular year was concerned; because the details had already been settled and orders had been passed by the Government

of India. The informal discussion which is held at an earlier date makes it possible for effect to be given to some, at least, of the recommendations of the non-official members, before the Budget is submitted to the Government of India for approval.

The Judicial Service.

Of all the features of Sir Andrew Fraser's administration the one which was perhaps most subject to misrepresentation was his policy regarding the Judicial Service and, in particular, the High Court. A charge, or at least an insinuation, commonly brought against Sir Andrew Fraser was that he desired to undermine the authority of that tribunal. No charge could have been more baseless; and yet that charge was made even after an authoritative pronouncement of His Honour's attitude to the High Court had been published in the Blue Book on the reconstitution of the Provinces of Bengal and Assam. In this it was stated:—"The mischievous idea which some men try to propagate that the Government resents the interference of the High Court with executive matters, and desires to undermine its authority and curtail its jurisdiction, is altogether without foundation. It is merely an illustration of the unscrupulous manner in which the opposition to the Government proposals has sometimes been conducted. The High Court owes its existence to the genius of the British Government in India, which desires that the administration of India should be in accordance with justice and righteousness, and which has accordingly established an independent judicial authority for the disposal of judicial business. There is no inclination on the part of the Government to set aside the authority of the High Court." So far, indeed, from doing anything to weaken the High Court, Sir Andrew sought, as far as possible, to maintain its dignity. In particular, he was careful to consult it on matters affecting, or likely to affect, the administration of justice or of the law. The recommendations of the Judges were scrupulously sought, and, when given, as scrupulously considered by His Honour.

As regards the Judicial Service generally, it was the aim of Sir Andrew to bring it into closer touch with other branches of the administration. He found that there was a good deal of friction between it and the Executive Service instead of harmony and co-operation. There was a feeling that the interests of the Judicial Department were not represented in the Government of the Province. Judicial officers felt that their views and concerns were not known directly to the Lieutenant-Governor, and that they were

kept too much apart and too little considered. As one means of improving this unsatisfactory state of things Sir Andrew made it a practice to appoint, whenever possible, a member of the Judicial Service as Judicial Secretary. This was an innovation; for though the appointments of Secretaries to the Government of Bengal are regarded as open to officers in either the Executive or the Judicial branch of the Indian Civil Service, in practice these appointments had been filled by members of the Executive branch only. It was also a successful innovation, His Honour finding it of great value to have the advice and assistance of an officer of ripe judicial experience in dealing with the many important judicial questions which arise in Bengal.

In this connection a brief reference may be made to the inspection of subordinate Courts by Judges of the High Court. When the High Court was constituted, provision was made for its exercising supervision over such courts, as calculated to "improve the administration of justice, strengthen the highest court of judicature in the country, and elevate the character of the other courts." But the powers thus conferred had lost in the past a large proportion of their value for want of personal inspection; and it seemed to His Honour that they would continue to be to a certain extent ineffective, unless individual Judges went periodically into the interior of Bengal, and examined for themselves the state of the courts for which they were responsible. To enable such inspection to be made, the temporary appointment of an Additional Acting Judge of the High Court was sanctioned, at His Honour's instance, in 1904 and again in 1905; and the personal examination of subordinate courts has become a more regular practice.

Among other administrative changes in the Judicial Service may be mentioned the creation in 1905 of the district of Darbhanga into a separate Judgeship, the transfer at the same time of the district of Champaran from the jurisdiction of the District and Sessions Judge of Saran to that of the District and Sessions Judge of Muzaffarpur, and the extension of the trial by jury system to Khulna. A separate Judge has also been appointed for the district last named.

Calcutta Police Courts.

As regards the Calcutta Police Courts, several reforms had been made shortly before Sir Andrew Fraser became Lieutenant-Governor. Complaints of delay in the disposal of cases had been frequent for some years past; and as the congestion was largely due to a great number of municipal cases, a Municipal Magistrate, with a separate establishment, was appointed by Sir John Woodburn in 1901 for the trial

of municipal offences in Calcutta and its suburbs. Complaints of delay, however, still continued. An inspection of the Courts was made by two Judges of the High Court, whose report largely influenced the measures taken by Sir James Bourdillon in 1903. A member of the Indian Civil Service was appointed to the post of Chief Presidency Magistrate; the work of reorganizing the courts was entrusted to him; and all Presidency Magistrates were declared subordinate to him. A third Presidency Magistrate was also appointed temporarily.

During the quinquennium of Sir Andrew Fraser's administration, the work of the Police Courts continued to increase; and the appointment of the third Presidency Magistrate was accordingly made permanent in 1906. It had by this time become apparent that a larger staff than three Stipendiary Magistrates was necessary for this great city with a population of nearly a million souls. The number of cases tried by the Courts had risen between 1901 and 1906 from 20,137 to 30,028, or by 50 per cent.; and the existing three Magistrates were overburdened with work. Apart, moreover, from these considerations, Sir Andrew keenly desired that all juvenile cases should be tried by one stipendiary court. In these circumstances, His Honour urged the necessity for the permanent appointment of a fourth Presidency Magistrate; and this appointment was sanctioned in 1907.

It remains to note the policy pursued by Sir Andrew regarding the appointment of the Chief Presidency Magistrate. His predecessor, Sir James Bourdillon, had appointed a member of the Indian Civil Service to that office. The state of the Police Courts at that time was not satisfactory owing to want of organization and absence of adequate control. It was recognized as essential that whoever was appointed should possess not only judicial knowledge and ability, but also administrative capacity and experience sufficient to enable him first to organize and then to supervise the working of the Courts. After carefully considering the claims and qualifications of various members of the Bar, Sir James Bourdillon was unable to find any barrister, possessing these qualifications, who would accept the post on the pay fixed. He therefore appointed Mr. D. Weston, I.C.S., to the post in October 1903. When that officer vacated the post owing to ill-health in August 1904, Sir Andrew Fraser selected as his successor another member of the Indian Civil Service, Mr. D. H. Kingsford, in order that the reforms initiated might be successfully carried through. The appointments were fully justified by the increased efficiency of the Courts

and by the improvements effected in the despatch of business. There was, however, a strong feeling in Calcuta in favour of the appointment of a barrister as Chief Presidency Magistrate. A promise was therefore given that when Mr. Kingford's tenure of the appointment was over, Government would be willing to appoint a barrister, if a suitable man could be found; and this promise was fulfilled in 1908.

Reorganization of the Provincial and Subordinate Civil Services.

In 1904 Sir Andrew Fraser introduced an important change in the method of appointing members of the Provincial Executive and Subordinate Civil Services. Under the system in force since 1893 the Lieutenant-Governor made appointments to these services (1) on the results of a competitive examination held expressly for the purpose; (2) by selection from among candidates appearing at that examination; and (3) in the case of the Provincial Service, by promoting selected officers already serving in the Subordinate Civil Service. It was also open to the Lieutenant-Governor to appoint in exceptional cases any person whom he might consider to be specially qualified for either service by nomination, pure and simple. This system, in the opinion of Sir Andrew Fraser, had failed to secure what should be the aim of Government in making appointments to its service, viz., to reconcile the conflicting claims of different races, of rival religions, and of varying decrees of intellectual and administrative aptitude and adaptability: in other words, to ensure that appointments in Government service should be open to men of all castes and creeds in different parts of the Province. The actual state of affairs was far different, for important but comparatively backward communities, such as Biharis, Uriyas and Muhammadans, were not fairly represented.

Sir Andrew Fraser did not lay the blame for this state of affairs entirely, or even mainly, on the system of competition. Out of an annual average of 18 appointments, only three had been made as the result of the competitive examination, and then only after necessary enquiries had been made in regard to the physical fitness and moral character of the candidates. Four other candidates were appointed not by competition, but by selection from among candidates who had qualified at this examination, and two more appointments were made by nomination pure and simple. Both selection and nomination, however, had been conducted in a way which could not secure a just comparison of the claims of candidates. The selection was made at Calcutta; and it had been too often made without the possibility of judging of the special fitness of the selected candidate. As regards the method of appointment on the results of a competitive

examination, the Government of India had recently laid down that this was not a suitable or satisfactory system of admission to Government service in India. Apart, moreover, from this general principle, actual experience had shown that members of the more highly educated classes who happened to have a peculiar aptitude for passing examinations were unduly predominant, while members of less advanced races or creeds felt that competition was hopeless: the system, in fact, deprived them of the hope of getting into Government service. On these grounds, Sir Andrew Fraser was convinced that the whole system of recruitment was unsuitable as a means of selecting candidates for the public service, and required revision.

It seemed to him, and to a large body of officials and non-official (mostly Indian) gentlemen whom he consulted, that it was quite unnecessary to have a special competitive examination in a Province where there was only one University, and that it would be a far better plan to appoint candidates not because they had qualified in a special test of this kind, but because they had qualified in the University. While realizing that the progress of education has rendered it necessary to demand high educational qualifications from candidates for the public service, it was, he considered, far better evidence of educational fitness and of strength of character to hold a degree in a University than to qualify in a single competitive examination. The Lieutenant-Governor decided, therefore, to request the Syndicate of the University to assist him by nominating every year six men who had been the most distinguished students of that year, and who were believed to be of good moral character and physically fit for employment in Government service. From among these the Lieutenant-Governor, after making a careful enquiry as to their character, and after ascertaining that they were willing to accept the appointment, and were physically fit for the Government service, would select three, reserving the power, if necessary, to make his selection not merely from the six candidates nominated in a single year, but also from any of those nominated from time to time by the Syndicate, who had not passed the age of twenty-five years. As the grant of this privilege to the Syndicate was a novel experiment, it was decided that it should be a temporary arrangement in the first instance, until such time as experience should have been gained of its working; and it was therefore introduced for a period of five years only.

Five other appointments were to be made by promotion from among Sub-Deputy Collectors, including excise officers of

corresponding rank, the basis of selection being not seniority, but merit as proved by good work and high character. One appointment was to be given to a student of the Agricultural College, and two other appointments were reserved to be made by the Lieutenant-Governor himself. For the rest, instead of leaving the selection to the Lieutenant-Governor and his staff at headquarters, it was decided that the Commissioners should nominate candidates who had obtained University degrees, so that men might be appointed who had not only a better educational qualification than the mere passing of a competitive examination, but who were known to responsible officers as men likely to make good public servants. As regards the Subordinate Civil Service, nine appointments were to be made from among candidates nominated by Commissioners, three by the Board of Revenue by selection from among the officers employed in the Departments under it, and one by selection from among students in the Provincial College of Agriculture.

This change was introduced with the full approval of the Government of India, and it is expected that the result will be to encourage education, and also, in all probability, to secure a better class of Government servants.

Reorganization of Registration Department.

Next year (in 1905) sanction was given to a scheme for the reorganization of the Registration Department, which had been initiated by Sir James Bourdillon. Under the system till then in force Rural Sub-Registrars were supposed to be respectable residents of the places in which the registry offices were situated, men of mature age fitted for sedentary work, who would perform the work of registration in their leisure hours in return for a certain percentage of fees. In practice, however, it was found impossible to obtain a sufficient supply of officers of this class, and a system grew up of appointing as "special apprentices" a certain number of young men, who learnt the work as unpaid apprentices in the hope of obtaining later on appointments as Rural Sub-Registrars. This system proved a failure. With the growing popularity of registration, the work in nearly every place occupied the whole time of the Sub-Registrars. The methods of recruitment often failed to supply officers of the stamp necessary to conduct the business of a large public department, and for many years complaints were common that corruption was rife in registration offices. The system of payment by fees also led to great administrative inconvenience; for the emoluments were attached to the offices, and promotion necessarily involved a transfer with all its inconveniences, while, on the other hand, it might sometimes be expedient, in the interests of the public service, to transfer

an officer, but impossible to do so without decreasing his remuneration. Lastly, the calculation of the fees was a very cumbrous process and opened a wide door to fraud It was felt therefore that it was essential to adopt a new method of recruitment, to offer fair and certain prospects, to recognize the Sub-Registrars as Government officers, and to establish a properly organized cadre.

The main features of the scheme introduced to effect these reforms are as follows:—(1) Special Sub-Registrars at the headquarters stations, who used to be remunerated partly by commission and partly by fixed salaries, were divided into four grades on fixed salaries personal to them, and their service continued to be pensionable. (2) Rural Sub-Registrars at outlying stations, who were remunerated entirely by commission, were divided into four grades on fixed salaries personal to them, and their service was made pensionable from the date of the introduction of the scheme. Sub-Registrars over the age of 45 were given the option of remaining under the old system of payment by commission, with the result that only a few continued to be paid by commission. (3) A grade of officers was formed for filling leave vacancies, and another grade of officers called "probationers" was constituted for filling up vacancies on account of casualties. (4) The salaries of the clerks and *muharrirs* of the rural offices were raised, and their payment was undertaken by Government. Their service also was made pensionable. Previous to the introduction of the scheme, these men used to be paid by the Sub-Registrars themselves out of an establishment allowance granted by Government, and their service was not pensionable.

The Registration Department has thus been placed on an entirely different footing, and is no longer "the refuge of old worn-out pensioners." It has been organized as a regular Government Department; and the Sub-Registrars and their establishments have been admitted to the benefits and privileges of leave and pension rules, and a better system of recruitment has been introduced.

Increase of cadre.

A considerable increase in the staff of Deputy Magistrate-Collectors and Sub-Deputy Collectors was also sanctioned in 1906. The rapid development of the Province had naturally brought with it a large increase of work, but there had been no corresponding increase in the number of officers available for the ordinary duties of district administration. Many districts were consequently undermanned, and the staff overworked, and this in spite of the higher standard of efficiency required. The results were apparent in many directions, and not the least

noticeable was the way in which the district staff were prevented from coming into contact with and obtaining a full knowledge of the people under them. Except in the smaller districts, the time of the District Officer was unduly occupied by the drudgery of office and routine work, the senior officer at headquarters could not be spared for work outside the station, and other officers were equally tied to their desks. Consequently, less touring in the interior was done than formerly, and in the absence of an organization of village officials, such as exists in other Provinces, much was necessarily left to the police. Sir Andrew Fraser, convinced of the importance of free and frequent communication between the officials and the people, could not but view this state of affairs with grave concern; at the same time he was prevented by the inadequacy of the staff from carrying into effect a reform he had in contemplation, viz., the employment of separate officers on criminal work and of others solely on revenue and administrative duties. He accordingly made strong representations as to the urgent necessity for a substantial increase of the cadre of the Provincial Executive and Subordinate Civil Services in the interests of efficient administration. As a result of these representations, an increase of 78 additional appointments in the cadre of the Provincial and of 25 appointments in the Subordinate Executive Service was sanctioned in 1906.

FEUDATORY STATES.

In the Central Provinces Sir Andrew Fraser had had a long and pleasant experience of the administration of Feudatory States, first during the five years he spent in Chhattisgarh, and later when he was Chief Commissioner. Keenly interested in this branch of government, he took measures to ascertain how far the system in force in Bengal was efficient and to the interest of the British Government, the Chiefs and their people. From the first, he took special care to deal personally with questions concerned with the management of the States, to visit them on tour, to become acquainted with the Chiefs, and to learn at first hand their circumstances. These personal enquiries he supplemented by deputing, in November 1904, an officer to tour through the Chota Nagpur States (except Saraikela and Kharsawan, which are directly under the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum), with orders to make a detailed report concerning the material

condition of the people, the mode of administration obtaining in each State, and the relations existing between the Chiefs and their subjects. As a result of the enquiries made both by himself and by the special officer, His Honour came to the conclusion that not only was the administration of Feudatory States more efficiently conducted in the Central Provinces, but that the Chiefs were on better terms with the officers of Government than in Bengal. He decided therefore to take measures to encourage the Chiefs to administer their States more efficiently and to recognize more fully their duties and responsibilities.

As a means to this end, Sir Andrew was convinced that he could not do better than introduce the system he had himself helped to work in the Chhattisgarh Division of the Central Provinces, where there were a number of States under a Political Agent, who was himself subordinate to the Commissioner. Each State was under the influence of the Political Agent, who did not unduly interfere with the administration of the State, but visited it every year, was on terms of kindly familiarity with the Chief, and assisted him with advice in regard to his administration. When for any reason it was impossible to carry on the administration through the ruler of the State himself, an officer of Government was appointed as Manager, and the State was thus brought more directly under the Political Agent. But such cases were exceptional. His Honour knew from experience that this arrangement worked most successfully. He was strongly of opinion that a similar system should be introduced for the Feudatory States of Bengal.

Sir Andrew Fraser received very striking corroboration of his view on this point in an interesting memorial presented to him by the Uriya Chiefs of the Central Provinces, whose States it was proposed to transfer to Bengal (Orissa). These Chiefs, all of whom he knew personally, stated that, apart from considerations affecting their status and powers, in regard to which their anxiety was easily set at rest, they had one serious objection to the transfer. This was that there was no Political Agent in Bengal. They pointed out how the Political Agent in the Central Provinces had always been their friend and adviser and how useful he had been to them in their administration. His Honour assured them that it was his intention to ask for a Political Agent for the Uriya States. When therefore the reconstitution of the Province was settled, and there had been created a homogeneous group of States, by transferring the Hindi-speaking States of Chota Nagpur to the Chhattisgarh Dvision

in the Central Provinces and the Uriya-speaking States of the Central Provinces to Bengal, he strongly recommended the appointment of a Political Agent. Sir Andrew's recommendation was accepted by the Government of India. In October 1905 the two States of Gangpur and Bonai were transferred from the Chota Nagpur Division to Orissa, and the five Uriya States—Patna, Kalahandi, Sonpur, Bamra and Rairakhol—were transferred to Orissa from the Central Provinces. This measure amalgamated the Uriya-speaking races of the Feudatory States into a compact whole, over which it was resolved to place a Political Agent.

By thus welding together a tract of country with common interests and common sentiments, facilities were afforded for the development of the States. As a preliminary measure to their further development, an officer was placed on special duty to enquire into and ascertain the needs and condition of the transferred States, to associate with the Chiefs, and to win their co-operation. Shortly afterwards, in April 1906, this officer, Mr. Cobden-Ramsay, I.C.S., was appointed Political Agent for the Tributary and Feudatory States of Orissa, subject to the control of the Commissioner. The general lines of policy laid down for the guidance of the Agent were that the Chiefs should be taught to understand their responsibility for the administration of their States; efforts should be made to render them capable of efficient administration; and the supervision exercised over them should be only such as might be necessary to keep the British Government in touch with their administration. Briefly, the Chiefs were to be left to manage the affairs of their own States without interference, so long as they worked on reasonable lines of progress, and refrained from oppression and injustice. The Political Agent was to be the friend, adviser, and colleague of each Chief. And the Commissioner was to be the official superior of both. The wisdom of His Honour's policy was soon apparent. Hitherto little had been done to encourage the Chiefs; and a spirit, if not of actual mistrust, at any rate of aloofness and suspicion had been engendered. They were now assured of the friendly attentions and good-will of Government, and their confidence was gained.

Nothing perhaps has done more to establish the self-respect of the Chiefs, and thereby induce them to take a keener interest in their administration, than the principle, established for the first time during the Lieutenant-Governorship of Sir Andrew Fraser, that no Chief could be sued as a party in a case either in his own State or before the

Courts of the Political Officers. It had hitherto been the custom for the Chiefs to appear as parties in suits and cases before the Commissioner. This procedure was highly derogatory to the status of the Chiefs; it was contrary to the terms of their *sanads;* and its prohibition was regarded as one of the greatest boons conferred on them by Government. They were set free from litigation with its expenses and worries, and were required, in terms of their *sanads*, merely to submit disputes to the friendly advice of the Commissioner and Political Agent.

The next step taken to improve the status of the Chiefs, and to ensure a better administration of their States, was the preparation of a Feudatory States Manual. Every care was taken to ascertain the actual facts governing the relations between the British Government and the States, and between the Chiefs and their subjects; and those facts were carefully recorded. Without going into too much detail, the main principles laid down were that:—(1) interference with the administrative action of the Chiefs was to be carefully refrained from, except in cases of real oppression and injustice; (2) difference of opinion in civil suits was not to justify interference; (3) the Chiefs' subjects were not to be encouraged to petition British officers; and the latter were not to institute enquiries, except in special cases, until the Chief had been given an opportunity of dealing with the case himself; and (4) no Chief should be made a party to a suit or case. The Chiefs for their part were placed for the first time in possession of a clear record showing the lines of policy on which they should work and the standard which they were expected to reach in their administration. They found that their social status and official position were carefully protected, and that no Feudatory Chief, however small his domain or however limited his powers, was to be belittled in his own State. They felt secure in their dealings with the representatives of the paramount power; and they realized that, in future, the personal views of any particular officer could not cause a sudden change in their position and in the system of administration. It was, in fact, made clear to the Chiefs that they were looked upon as a valuable asset in the administration of the Province.

Another important measure taken by Sir Andrew was to increase the powers of some of the Chiefs. The Feudatory States, it may be explained, after the transfer of five States from the Central Provinces, consisted of three groups of which the Chiefs had varying degrees of powers. The

Chiefs of the Sambalpur group, *i.e.*, of the States transferred from the Central Provinces, had full powers in criminal cases, except that capital sentences required confirmation by a British officer. The Chiefs of the States of Chota Nagpur had powers to pass sentences of imprisonment up to five years, while the powers of the Chiefs of the Tributary Mahals of Orissa were ordinarily limited to passing sentences of two years' imprisonment, a fine of Rs. 2,000 and whipping. The difference in powers was probably due originally to mere chance at the time when the powers were recognized. But, however this may be, the creation of the Political Agency naturally brought these variations into prominence; and Chiefs with smaller powers felt their status to be inferior, complained that the distinction was invidious, and requested that they might be granted fuller powers.

Sir Andrew gave them a sympathetic hearing. He had an examination made of their *sanads* and of the history of their States, and found that the distinction was not justified on historical grounds. It appeared also to be unsound on other grounds. It threw unnecessary work upon British officers outside the States, who had to deal with cases which the Chiefs could not dispose of. It was opposed to the policy of Government, viz., not to withhold from the Feudatory Chiefs plenary powers in the administration of justice, when their personal character and the resources of their States showed that they were capable of maintaining an advanced standard of administration. He therefore recommended to the Government of India that the Chiefs of the old Chota Nagpur States and of the original Orissa Tributary Mahals should be granted such powers as the administration of the State warranted in each case. The Government of India sanctioned the proposal. This measure has given the Chiefs in question an incentive to good administration, and at the same time they fully understand that any failure to keep up the standard of their administration, or any abuse of their powers, will entail the loss of the privileges conferred upon them.

In conclusion, the principal features of Sir Andrew's policy in regard to the Feudatory States may be briefly summarized. He endeavoured to help the Chiefs to realize their dignity; for unless they realized their dignity, they would not realize their responsibilities. He considered it a matter of the utmost importance to let them see that the British Government is interested in their welfare and in maintaining their prestige with their subjects. And he deprecated any interference with their internal administration

which was not necessary for the protection of their subjects. On no part of his administration does Sir Andrew look back with greater pleasure.

AGRARIAN MEASURES.

In no direction perhaps has administrative progress been more marked during recent years than in the improvement of the legislative machinery which controls the relations of landlords and tenants in the Province. These relations are mainly regulated in Bihar, Lower Bengal, and largely also in Orissa, by the Bengal Tenancy Act, VIII of 1885; in the Chota Nagpur Division by Act I of 1879; and in the peculiar district of the Sonthal Parganas, which is wedged in between Chota Nagpur and the rest of Bengal, by Regulation III of 1872. Far-reaching changes have been or are being made in each of these legislative enactments, so as to bring their provisions into closer accord with the developments and requirements of agrarian life in the areas governed by them. The following is an account of the measures taken to improve these enactments and of the circumstances which necessitated their revision.

Amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act.

The most important agrarian measure carried out during the Lieutenant-Governorship of Sir Andrew Fraser was the amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act. The necessity of amending that Act in the interests of both landlords and tenants had been urged some years before. In December 1900 the British Indian Association had submitted a representation suggesting a number of amendments of the Tenancy Act in view of the difficulties which landlords encountered, and the losses they suffered in realizing rents and cesses. Subsequently, in September 1902, the Board of Revenue drew attention to the rarity of cases in which the records of survey and settlement proceedings were examined before decrees were given by Civil Courts for rents higher than those recorded after careful enquiries by Revenue Officers. Further investigation followed on this point and on the necessity of legislation to protect raiyats from illegal or undue enhancement of rents; and eventually in September 1904 the question of amending the Tenancy Act was considered at a conference attended by all the Commissioners of the Province. The great majority were of opinion that it was necessary to give weak and subservient tenants increased protection from illegal and undue enhancement of rents in Court and out of Court; and after

further enquiry a short draft Bill dealing with the maintenance of the record-of-rights, the enhancement of rents, and the preparation of a record-of-rights in water used for agricultural purposes, was drawn up and circulated for opinion. This Bill was subjected to a good deal of hostile criticism.

The Lieutenant-Governor called together some of his most experienced Revenue and Settlement Officers and a considerable number of the most influential and intelligent of the zamindars, and had several prolonged conferences with them. Certain points were fully discussed; and it was decided, before proceeding further, to appoint a smaller Committee to consider the important questions raised in connection with the amendment of the Act. A representative Committee was accordingly appointed, presided over by Mr. (now Sir Lancelot) Hare, then Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, on which four Hindu non-official members served. The members of this Committee were unanimously of opinion that the amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act should be effected by a comprehensive measure dealing not only with the questions referred to them, but with all the defects and difficulties that had from time to time been brought to light in the working of the Act. Their recommendation was accepted by His Honour, and a draft Bill, dealing with all the points thought worthy of consideration, was prepared. This Bill was expounded by the Lieutenant-Governor to a meeting of zamindars at Belvedere, and was then submitted for report to a strong Committee appointed in 1906 to assist Government with its advice. The Committee was presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rampini, a Judge of the High Court, and amongst its nine members included four influential non-officials who were representative of the landholding interest.

The Bill as it left the hands of the Committee was a compromise which attempted to deal fairly with the conflicting interests involved. Melancholy evidence had been obtained of the extent to which zamindars had abused their powers; and, on the other hand, Government desired to do all in its power to meet the reasonable demands of the zamindars and to facilitate the collection of their dues. The Bill was, therefore, designed to protect weak tenantry from unscrupulous landlords, and at the same time to protect good landlords against intractable tenants, and to secure them in the just enjoyment of their rights. Thanks to this spirit of compromise, and to the careful preliminary consideration and discussion which it received, the Bill met with little opposition of

a serious nature in Council, and was very slightly altered before it passed into law as Bengal Act I of 1907.

The objects of the Act are briefly as follow:—(1) to give greater facilities to landlords for the collection of rent, and at the same time to discourage evasion of the law by collusive compromises; (2) to give greater authority to the settlement records; (3) to enable Government to deal more effectively with oppressive landlords; and (4) to remove other defects and difficulties in the working of the Act. The first object was attained by empowering the Local Government to extend to the estates of approved landlords, under certain restrictions, the summary procedure for the recovery of rents known as the "certificate procedure." Hitherto competent authorities had declared that it was impossible to devise a solution of the problem how to give landlords a summary procedure for the recovery of rents without danger of serious oppression to their raiyats by dishonest and unscrupulous landlords. It was realized that this danger was a real one, and that such powers could only be given to landlords if carefully safeguarded. The concession was, therefore, hedged in by important limitations and conditions. It was laid down that the procedure was to be allowed only to landlords whose accounts were properly kept, and only in areas in which a record-of-rights had not only already been prepared and published, but was being periodically revised. Another important amendment was that which made it possible for a co-sharer landlord, who complied with certain conditions, to obtain a decree which would have the force of a rent decree, and not of a mere money decree, as under the former law.

On the other hand, raiyats were protected from *ex-parte* decrees and from illegal compromises by provisions which made it necessary for plaintiffs in rent-suits to produce extracts from the record-of-rights, and which prevented Civil Courts from accepting compromises embodying agreements which would be illegal if embodied in contracts between the parties. This was a most important provision, for it had been found that one of the commonest devices by which landlords obtained unduly enhanced rents was to force their raiyats to agree to a compromise in the Civil Court, by which they obtained an enhanced rent far larger than could have been obtained by a contract. In this way the Courts were used to enforce a demand which the landlord knew he could not obtain in fair fight, and to give a legal colouring to an improper enhancement; and this was facilitated by the fact that the Civil Courts, as a rule, took no notice of the record-of-rights, unless the parties to a case put them in

The second object of the Act, viz., giving greater authority to the record-of-rights, when such a record had been duly prepared and published, was obtained by an emphatic statement of the proviso that every entry in a record-of-rights duly published shall be presumed to be correct until it is proved by evidence to be incorrect. This proviso was necessary in view of the fact that, though enormous expenditure had been incurred in having an elaborate and accurate record-of-rights prepared on the spot, in presence of the interested parties, by a trained and competent staff, the record had been neglected or overridden, as if it were absolutely useless, and rents enhanced without reference to or in spite of it.

The third object was attained by additions to the Act which rendered it possible to deal more stringently with landlords who failed to grant proper rent receipts, and which empowered Government of its own initiative, with the sanction of the Governor-General in Council, to settle rents, and, if need be, to reduce them, in areas where rents had been illegally enhanced.

One of the most important miscellaneous amendments of the Act is that contained in new sections 109B and 109C, which instruct Revenue Officers employed on settlement work how to deal with rent compromises tendered in the course of the operations. While all compromises that would be illegal, if embodied in contract, may be rejected, specially empowered Revenue Officers may be allowed discretion in the settlement, by agreement, of rents which to their satisfaction are fair and equitable. The value of this enactment has recently been proved in South Monghyr, where, without it, the thorny question of illegal rent enhancement in certain large estates could never have been dealt with satisfactorily. Another important addition to the law is a section which makes it possible to prepare a record of water rights in areas where disputes regarding these have arisen or are likely to arise. Among the minor amendments of the Act may be noted the addition to sections 18A and 18B to facilitate the registration of the transfer of permanent tenures; the revision of section 22 to discourage the acquisition of occupancy holdings by landlords; the alteration in section 52, which makes it easier for landlords to prove excess area; and the modification of section 69 which affects distraint and appraisement proceedings.

Chota Nagpur Tenancy legislation.

Another important subject which received special attention from Sir Andrew Fraser was the necessity of a sound agrarian policy for the inhabitants of Chota Nagpur, a people at once conservative, excitable and tenacious of their rights.

Owing to the aggression of landlords, there has been agrarian trouble, more or less acute, in Chota Nagpur since the Kol rebellion of 1831. The disturbances were renewed in 1858, and after much agitation the first remedial measure was passed in the Chota Nagpur Tenures Act of 1869, of which the object was to ascertain, record, and regulate the lands belonging to the tenures under which land in Chota Nagpur falls for the most part, viz., *bhuinhari*, *i.e.*, held by persons claiming to be descendants of the original founders of the village; *majahas*, *i.e.*, reserved for the absolute use of the village zamindars; and *rajahas*, or ordinary rent-paying land. The Act of 1869 did not provide for a record of the *rajahas* land, and the Special Commissioner appointed under it dealt only with the *bhuinhari* and *majahas* land.

Ten years later the Landlord and Tenant Act of 1879 was passed, which was based upon Act X of 1859, formerly the rent law for the whole of Upper India. It did not, however, go to the root of the troubles, nor did the land have rest after it. The raiyats specially complained of exactions made by the landlords in the matter of services and cesses. From 1887 to 1890 there was agitation connected with claims made by the landlords for services, claims made by the tenants to hold land at quit-rents, petitions made by zamindars and raiyats for the assistance of the authorities, etc. Rents were withheld, and meetings were held at which leaders of the raiyats incited them to take possession of *majahas* land. Government recognized that there was a deep-rooted spirit of antagonism between landlord and tenant, the chief causes of dispute being the system of *bethbegari*, by which the tenant was bound to perform a certain amount of unpaid labour for the landlord, and the levy, in addition to rent, of numerous *rakumats* or cesses, in money and kind, uncertain in their incidence. Finally, after much discussion, it was decided to pass an Act for the record and commutation of predial services into an equivalent cash rent. This Act was Act II of 1897, known as the Commutation Act, which is confined to the record of predial services, *i.e.*, services of ploughing, digging, sowing, and reaping for the landlord and carrying his burdens on journeys, and to their commutation into cash payments.

Two years later the disputes, which had continued during the decade, culminated in the disturbances of 1899-1900, when troops and armed police had to be called out to put down acts of violence in the Munda country in Ranchi. These outrages were committed at the instigation of religious fanatics, but were intimately connected with the agrarian

dissensions. The rising was, in fact, the result of the long smouldering disaffection which existed among the Mundas owing to the non-recognition of their rights. The Chota Nagpur Tenures Act of 1869 had, indeed, effected some improvement, but it did not go far enough, as it took no notice of intact Mundari *khuntkatti* villages. The landlords continued to oust the tenants from *khuntkatti* tenancies, and the *khuntkattidars* to struggle to retain them. Mundari *khuntkattidars*, it may be explained, are Mundari cultivators descended from the original founders of a village, who by local custom have special and peculiar rights.

The then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Woodburn, came to the conclusion that "the essence of the whole business is to get a correct record of existing facts in tenants' holdings"; and it was decided in 1901 to effect a survey and settlement of the Munda tract in the Ranchi district, which extends over about 1,850 square miles. It was, however, recognized that, if steps were not taken to safeguard by legislation the rights of these people and to secure the finality of the record-of-rights, the latter alone would not suffice to allay agitation. Accordingly, in the Chota Nagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Act of 1903, which was introduced to amend the law of landlord and tenant in Chota Nagpur except Manbhum, special provisions were inserted in respect of *khuntkatti* tenures. Among them may be mentioned section 164, which provides that the record-of-rights, when published, shall be conclusive evidence on the question whether a tenancy is a Mundari *khuntkattidari* tenancy, and section 152, which provides restrictions on the transfer of Mundari *khuntkattidari* tenancies.

Briefly, the position when Sir Andrew Fraser assumed charge of the Province was as follows. For generations the aborigines of Chota Nagpur had been in a state of unrest owing to their inability to protect what they believe to be their rights in the land. They enjoy special rights and privileges in respect of the lands cultivated by them, and these are recognized by the indigenous landlords. But for many years past, these landlords had gradually been losing their estates to aliens, chiefly of the money-lender class; and the latter, when they came into possession, always endeavoured to break down the rights of the cultivators and to enchance their rents. The result was that there had been constant disputes between landlords and tenants and, occasionally, armed risings of the latter. To remedy this state of affairs the Tenures Act of 1869 and the Landlord and Tenant Procedure Act of 1879 were passed; but subsequent events, culminating in

another uprising of this clan, showed that further measures were required to put an end to the legitimate grievances of the Mundas. Government accordingly determined to have a record-of-rights prepared for the Ranchi district, and the enquiries thereby originated showed that the aborigines had no confidence or trust in the Courts, owing chiefly to their mental inferiority as compared with the Aryans opposed to them. They were therefore made to understand that Government would, as far as possible, deal with their claims by special enquiry on the spot, so that there should be no doubt in the future in regard to those that were recognized. Accordingly, Bengal Act V of 1903 was passed, and a part of that Act dealt with the subject of Mundari *khuntkatti* tenancies. The Settlement Officer began operations in the most disturbed portion of the Ranchi district, and succeeded in restoring, to some extent, confidence in the minds of the aborigines, who had unfortunately been made most suspicious by past events.

At his first visit to Ranchi in September 1905, Sir Andrew Fraser made special enquiries regarding the progress of the settlement and the working of the laws above mentioned. He found that through the ignorance of the Courts, aided by the apathy of local officers until more recent years, immense injustice had been done to the Mundas by the agency of the law. The feeling created in the minds of many of them was one of great bitterness against the Government, whose failure to interfere on their behalf they had not been able to understand. This feeling had been fomented by unscrupulous men, who, for their own purposes and pecuniary gain, assisted in overreaching the Mundas, while pretending to be their friends.

Special laws had been made, and an expensive settlement undertaken in order to check this mischief. But there was a danger of the former being rendered fruitless by the entire ignoring of it by officers trying suits between landlords and tenants and by their want of knowledge of the peculiar customs and tenures existing in Chota Nagpur. His Honour, therefore, requested Mr. H. W. C. Carnduff, C.I.E., whom he had appointed to be Judicial Commissioner of Chota Nagpur, to bring out an annotated edition of the Local Tenancy Act and publish, as an appendix, a paper by Mr. E. Lister, I.C.S., the Settlement Officer, and the Revd. Father Hoffmann, S.J., a local missionary with great knowledge of the people, in which a full account was given of the land system of the Mundari country in Ranchi. At the same time, Mr. Carnduff directed the Courts to make all

possible use of the Settlement Records; and Mr. Lister instructed Judicial Officers in the nature and contents of those records and arranged to keep them aware of the progress of his work. Arrangements were also made to bring the Settlement Officers and the ordinary district staff into closer touch, so that the latter might be better acquainted with what the former were doing. These measures have been attended with excellent results.

The enquiries made by Sir Andrew Fraser also showed that, although much good was being done by the settlement, other measures were still necessary; and it was arranged that Mr. F. A. Slacke, C.S.I., the Commissioner, should draw up with Mr. Lister a joint note showing what further remedial action was required. This note was received by His Honour in August 1905; and the measures therein indicated as necessary are now in course of being taken. One new subdivision has already been opened at Khunti; and it is in contemplation to open two others in the north and south-west of the Ranchi district.

Finally, Sir Andrew Fraser was satisfied that the agrarian law of Chota Nagpur needed thorough revision. The experience gained in the settlement made it clear that the local Tenancy Act failed in various important respects to take due account of the rights enjoyed by the aboriginal cultivators. A Bill to amend both the Chota Nagpur Landlord and Tenant Procedure Act and the Chota Nagpur Commutation Act, was accordingly drafted, introduced in Council, and referred to a Select Committee. Some of its provisions, however, were strongly objected to in Select Committee, while the reports of the local officers showed the necessity for further amendments not contemplated by the Bill, including the importation from the Bengal Tenancy Act of the law regarding settled raiyats, the provisions relating to non-occupancy raiyats, and a section saving local customs. In these circumstances, the Lieutenant-Governor decided to withdraw the Bill from Council with a view to further revision. A rough draft of a revised Bill was prepared in consultation with the officers possessing most knowledge of agrarian conditions in Chota Nagpur; and its provisions were discussed in detail, during a visit of His Honour to Ranchi in August 1907, at a series of conferences attended by the local officers and selected representatives of the landlords and tenants of Chota Nagpur. The last conference was presided over by His Honour; and the Bill was discussed in every detail in respect of which there remained any difference of opinion. The result of these conferences was

most gratifying, for practical unanimity was obtained regarding most of the matters dealt with in the revised Bill. This Bill was further revised in accordance with the conclusions then arrived at; but it was found that by this time the number of amendments had become excessive, and that it would be very difficult to fit the alterations and additions into the framework of the existing Act I (B.C.) of 1879. It had long been recognized that this Act was very badly drafted. It was, therefore, decided to take the opportunity to re-arrange and consolidate the whole of the principal enactments relating to landlord and tenant in Chota Nagpur in an entirely new amending Bill. The Bill was introduced in Council and passed into law in 1908.

Encumbered estates.

This Act is intended for the protection of the aboriginal peasantry of Chota Nagpur against alien adventurers. Another measure has been brought forward for preserving the status of the large hereditary landlords. They are at present protected to some extent by the Chota Nagpur Encumbered Estates Act, which was passed to meet the constant danger of their being sold up for indebtedness and of their estates passing into the hands of usurers. The Act provides for the management of the encumbered estates by the civil authorities; but there is a serious obstacle in the way of its successful working, viz., that an estate can only be brought under protection on the application of the proprietor or his heir, or when it has been attached in execution of a decree of a Civil Court. Experience has shown that the proprietors of estates are often so short-sighted as to postpone applying for protection until their debts have become so heavy, that it is no longer possible to save their property. The result is that protection has to be refused, their estates are sold up, and the family sinks into oblivion. This is the more serious because the leading zamindars were all of them at one time independent or semi-independent Chiefs, and it is politically most undesirable that they should be exposed to the risk of disappearing.

The ruin of the old hereditary families also reacts on the peasantry. In Chota Nagpur the landlord is not the absolute owner of the land. The aboriginal raiyats enjoy special rights in respect of the enjoyment of forest produce, the clearing of waste, and the like. Their rents, also, are very low. The hereditary landlords acquiesce in their enjoyment of these customary rights. But when estates fall into the hands of aliens, the latter invariably claim full *proprietary rights*, and do all they can to enhance

rents. The cultivators are unable to hold their own in the law courts or to cope with the chicanery brought to bear against them. They give way for a time, but at last turn on their oppressors and on other foreigners. There have been repeated instances of this in the history of Chota Nagpur, the last being the Mundari rising of 1899-1900. In circumstances like this, the case for special legislation appeared to the Lieutenant-Governor to be overwhelmingly strong. A Bill to amend the Encumbered Estates Act has accordingly been introduced with provisions enabling Government to assume the management of estates in such cases. At the same time, it is proposed that the consent of the Lieutenant-Governor to such assumption of management should not be given, unless either (1) the holder of the estate belongs to a family of political or social importance, or (2) the Lieutenant-Governor is satisfied that the application of the Act is desirable in the interests of the tenants.

The opportunity has also been taken to remedy certain defects which the practical working of the Act has brought to light. For instance, it often happens that encumbered proprietors incur fresh debts during the period of management. These debts, in themselves, cannot legally be recovered, but they are usually validated by the proprietors as soon as their estates are released. The result is that the proprietors again become embarrassed, and have once more to apply for protection. It is therefore proposed to take power to retain under management for an extended period estates which are brought under protection a second time. Again, the Act, unlike the Court of Wards Act of 1879, fails to empower the authorities to provide for the proper education of the children of disqualified proprietors. Another defect brought to light is the difficulty which the Act places in the way of raising loans from Trust Funds for the benefit of encumbered estates. Provisions to remedy these and other defects have been inserted in the Bill which is before the Bengal Legislative Council.

Sonthal Pargan as Regulations.

For the last 50 years the administration of the Sonthal Parganas has been governed by special Regulations. The first of these was Regulation XXXVII of 1855, passed after the Sonthal rebellion of that year, by which the area of the present district was separated from the ordinary administration and placed under the control of special officers. In spite of this, the district drifted more or less under the ordinary law and procedure, with unfortunate results. The discontent of the Sonthals came to a head in 1871, when they began to gather in large numbers with the avowed

object of obtaining redress for their grievances. Enquiry showed that their grievances were real. There had been extensive rack-renting, ejectment of village headmen, seizure of rent-free lands of village priests and others, breaking up of the village community system so much cherished by the Sonthals, and other acts of oppression by zamindars. This state of affairs was attributed to the gradual weakening of the discretionary powers of the Sonthal officers resulting from the indiscriminate introduction of laws, current in the Regulation districts, which were unsuited to the circumstances of the Sonthal population. Chief among these was Act X of 1859, which completely tied the hands of the local officers, and enabled zamindars to enhance rents largely and turn out village headmen at their pleasure, while still keeping within the letter of the law. The then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir George Campbell, considered that it would be almost impossible to define by an exact law the rights to which the people have an equitable claim, and that the only satisfactory course would be to put the whole matter in the hands of an able and judicious officer, acting on general principles laid down for his guidance. It was decided, therefore, that a rough settlement of the Sonthal Parganas should be carried out by a Settlement Officer untramelled by detailed laws, who would record the rights of all parties as determined by himself.

This object was secured by the enactment of Regulation III of 1872 "for the peace and good government of the Sonthal Parganas." That Regulation gave the Lieutenant-Governor full power to appoint officers to make a settlement of landed rights, to restore dispossessed headmen and others, to settle rents, and to record the customs and usages of the people. It also introduced a usury law limiting the accumulation of interest on debts, and it laid down what laws were to be in force and what left to the discretion of Government to introduce or withdraw from time to time. Under the provisions of the Regulation, Mr. Browne Wood, Deputy Commissioner and Settlement Officer, made a settlement of the whole district between the years 1873 and 1879, defining and recording the rights and duties of landlords and tenants, and, where necessary, fixing fair rents. One of the results of this settlement was to preserve the Sonthal village community system, under which the village community, as a whole, holds the village lands and has collective rights over the village waste. These rights, which have failed to secure recognition elsewhere in Bengal, were recorded and saved from encroachment. The settlement also established on a firm footing the status of the headman, and restrained

the zamindars from interfering with the management and internal economy of the villages.

Subsequently, doubts began to be entertained whether the Regulation of 1872 authorized settlements to be made from time to time. Certain officers held that it was a measure introduced for the settlement of the district once for all, ceasing to have any force as a settlement law as soon as the special settlement was concluded. It was feared that complications would arise on the expiry of the leases granted by the Settlement Officer; tenants might be induced or compelled to accept private engagements for higher rates; the rents might gradually become equalized at a higher figure; and this process of enhancement might bring about the unsatisfactory state of feeling which existed before 1872. It was, therefore, considered necessary that Government should keep the process of rent enhancement under its own control. It was also felt that it was necessary to furnish the zamindars with the means of obtaining, at their own expense, a resettlement of rent. Accordingly, Regulation II of 1886 was enacted with four objects:—(1) to make it clear that Government could, at any time, order a fresh settlement and revision of the record-of-rights; (2) to allow the zamindars reasonable facilities for obtaining, at their own expense, enhancements of rents after the expiry of the period of seven years, which had been fixed as the term of the settlement by Regulation III of 1872; (3) to permit of rents being determined, on the application of zamindars, in tracts which had not been settled under that Regulation; and (4) to prescribe that rents settled in future under Regulation III of 1872 or the new Regulation should hold good for 15 years or until they should be altered again under either Regulation. In 1888 the revision of the settlement of 1873-79 in certain estates was undertaken, and, after an interval of five years, was resumed in 1898.

This settlement was in progress when Sir Andrew Fraser assumed charge of the Province. It was, and is, being carried on with much more elaboration than the original settlements; and its progress brought to light certain defects in the Regulations. The first defect which required remedy was connected with the question of apportioning and recovering the cost incurred by Government in settlement proceedings. The Sonthal Parganas Rent Regulation, II of 1886, enabled settlements of rent to be made on the application of landlords or raiyats, and provided for the recovery by Government of the expenses incurred by it in connection with such proceedings. It did not, however, admit of the preparation of a record-of-rights at the same time

as a settlement of rents, and experience had shown that its provisions could be conveniently applied only when small areas are concerned. On the other hand, the Sonthal Parganas Settlement Regulation of 1872 provided for the preparation of a record-of-rights, as well as for a determination of rents, and had been found to be more suitable in cases in which considerable areas come under settlement. The latter Regulation, however, contained no provisions whereby costs could be recovered from parties benefited by the proceedings initiated under it. This defect was brought to notice shortly before Sir Andrew Fraser became Lieutenant-Governor, and a draft Regulation was drawn up to remedy it. The provisions of the Regulation were settled during the first year of his administration and were finally embodied in Regulation II of 1904.

The next matter taken in hand was the amendment of the Sonthal Parganas Rent Regulation, II of 1886, so as to provide for the enhancement of rent upon improvements effected by, or at the expense of, zamindars, and for the acquisition of lands required for the construction of works of improvement, buildings, etc. The Sonthal, it may be explained, is an active irrigator. As he reclaims land from the jungle, he terraces the slopes, throws embankments across the depressions, and dams the streams, thereby diverting the water on to his fields. The development of the irrigation system has further been facilitated by the system of village communes. Works that have been beyond the means and enterprise of the individual cultivator have been successfully carried through by the united efforts of the community, each member of which has shared in the general resultant good. Still, though much has been done by the village communities, their interest is confined to single villages, and they labour under the difficulty that, while their own resources are small, they cannot pledge their united security to obtain capital, inasmuch as the lands of the district are not transferable by mortgage or sale. Irrigation works, carried out by individual raiyats or village communities, are, therefore' necessarily of a minor character. Reservoirs and channels, affecting more villages than one and involving considerable outlay, can only be constructed and maintained by the zamindars. But, unlike the proprietors of permanently-settled estates in other districts, the zamindars of the Sonthal Parganas were, under the laws in force in that district, unable to obtain an immediate and fair return for money spent by them on works of improvement. They belong, moreover, to a class who are not likely to lay out capital on improvements unless they see a fair chance of obtaining a reasonable return for it. The law as it stood

gave them no prospect of such a return. In order, therefore, to encourage these zamindars to carry out irrigation works which cannot be undertaken by the raiyats themselves, Sir Andrew Fraser considered that, in this respect, they should be placed on a footing similar to that of their brethren in other districts. This object was secured by the enactment of Regulation III of 1907.

A revision of Regulation III of 1872 is also in contemplation, which involves several important principles. Chief among these is the principle emphasized by the settlement, and accepted by the ordinary Courts of the Sonthal Parganas in the disposal of agrarian cases, that raiyati land and the office of headman cannot be made the subject of transfer. The rulings of the local Civil Courts established under Act XXXVII of 1855, which like the Settlement Courts, are subject to the control of the Commissioner and of Government, have been from time to time referred to Government and been embodied in Government orders, which have upheld the policy of non-alienation and have given the Deputy Commissioner and other local officers, as guardians of the settlement, full powers to interfere with and set aside whatever is subversive of settlement rights and to enforce the obligations imposed by the record-of-rights. There has, however, always been a danger that suits valued at more than Rs. 1,000 may be filed by illicit transferees in the Courts established under Act XII of 1887, which are subject to the control of the High Court of Calcutta, and that the rulings of the local Courts, the orders of Government, and the provisions of the settlement records may not be regarded as binding by the Act XII Courts. It has, therefore, been regarded as essential that the non-transferability of raiyati lands, and the power of the Deputy Commissioner to interfere with illegal alienations and generally to enforce the provisions of the settlement records, should be definitely declared in the law. An amending Regulation has been drawn up embodying provisions to this effect, and other provisions intended to remedy defects in the machinery of Regulation III of 1872, viz., for the regulation of the transfer of suits to and from Civil and Settlement Courts, for the speedier disposal of objections to the published records, and for other miscellaneous matters.

SURVEYS AND SETTLEMENTS.

Separation of the Settlement Department.

The quinquennium of Sir Andrew Fraser's administration was marked by several important changes in the Settlement Department. This Department had been controlled since 1884 by the Director of Agriculture, or, as he was called later, the Director of Land Records and Agriculture. His duties in connection with settlements were at first light, but became heavier year after year. At the same time, the work connected with agricultural research increased steadily, till it became impossible for one man to deal adequately with both branches. The necessity of dividing the Department in two was recognized; and in 1905 a Department of Agriculture was constituted, leaving the Director of Land Records free to devote his whole attention to the supervision of the important settlements in progress.

Extension of operations.

The gradual extension of settlement operation to the whole Province was an object that had been steadily kept in view, ever since the Famine Commission of 1880 proposed that a general field survey should be undertaken, and a system of village records and accounts introduced in Bengal. "There are," they said, "special circumstances, which seem to us to render this administrative improvement particularly necessary in the Lower Provinces. Nowhere are the condition of the tenantry and their relations with the landlords questions of so great complexity; nowhere have they a more important bearing upon the public welfare. The land question, it will be admitted, is the great administrative problem in Bengal. Yet nowhere is the Government at a greater disadvantage in considering it."

In 1885 experimental operations were commenced in the district of Muzaffarpur, simultaneously with the passing of the Bengal Tenancy Act; and in 1891 orders were issued for a survey of the four districts of Muzaffarpur, Champaran, Saran and Darbhanga. Operations were next extended to North Monghyr and North Bhagalpur, and to the Munda country in the district of Ranchi; while in 1903 sanction was given to the survey and settlement of Purnea. The success of the operations was beyond question. The advantages secured by the preparation of a trustworthy map and record-of-rights were acknowledged not only by Government and its officers, but also by the landlords and their tenants. These considerations led to the proposal that all the districts of Bengal should be gradually brought under survey and settlement. The proposal was sanctioned in 1906, and work is now in progress.

Maintenance of records.

Another important decision arrived at during the administration of Sir Andrew Fraser is that settlement records are to be maintained, *i.e.*, kept regularly up to date, in districts already brought under settlement. This question had engaged the attention of Government for several years, Bengal officers advocating periodical revision rather than annual maintenance. The Government of India, however, were in favour of a system of continuous maintenance, and Sir Andrew held the same views. They pointed out that it served four purposes, viz., (1) to protect the rights of those who possess interests in the land; (2) to furnish information which will form the basis of the assessment of land revenue at the next settlement; (3) to provide information for various administrative purposes; and (4) to supply annual agricultural statistics. Another important consideration was the value of maintaining the record for purposes of general administration. For many years past officers in Bengal have laboured under the disadvantage of having no other agency than the police through which to communicate with the people; and the police consequently collect information required for revenue purposes. Both the Government of India and His Honour considered this system very unsatisfactory, and regarded it as an urgent necessity to have a revenue establishment through whom District Officers can get into closer touch with the rural population. It was accordingly decided that the system should be introduced as an experimental measure in the temporarily-settled districts of Orissa, where it was most likely to have a practical and educative value, and where arrangements for maintenance could most easily be made; and that, if successful there, it should be extended to the permanently-settled districts, as they come under settlement. This decision is of extreme importance, as it means that ultimately the rights of landlords and tenants in every acre of land, and the legality of every anna of rent, will be made the subject of annual or biennial scrutiny.

In order to give effect to this decision, an initial revision of the records was necessary. Even though the settlement of Orissa was only 10 or 12 years old, the record had already become largely obsolete; and it was necessary to bring it up to date and record the changes which had taken place before any scheme of continuous maintenance could be introduced. The work of revision was accordingly started in 1906 in the district of Balasore, and is now in progress. A draft Bill to provide for the maintenance of the record in Orissa has also been drawn up and circulated for the opinion and criticism of public bodies in Orissa. In

circulating this Bill, an authoritative assurance has been given that no interference whatever is contemplated with the terms of the last revenue settlement in Orissa. The same assurance had already been given in unmistakeable language with regard to the revision proceedings; but in spite of this, attempts were made to insinuate that, in the shape of record revision and maintenance, a disguised attack was being made upon the principles of the late revenue settlement. The opportunity was therefore taken to explain that nothing could be further from the intention of Government.

Supervising agency.

An important change which has recently taken place in the working of the Settlement Department is the abolition of the system of dual control under which the field work of settlement was jointly supervised by the Survey of India Department and the Settlement Department. This system has gradually been given up, and from the beginning of the field season of 1907-08, the latter Department has had everywhere sole charge of the operations from the cadastral survey stage onwards. The new system was first introduced on a large scale in 1899 in the Sonthal Parganas settlement, where about 5,000 square miles have been surveyed during the past 8 years under the direct supervision of the Settlement Department. The extension of the system to other tracts was one of the results of the deliberations of the Survey Committee in 1904. On their recommendation, the Government of India decided that the Survey of India should withdraw from Provincial revenue surveys and confine its attention to strictly professional work. Accordingly, the control of cadastral survey was taken over by the Settlement Department in Chota Nagpur in 1905; and the new system was introduced in Bihar in 1907-08.

One notable result of this change has been the necessity for organizing a Provincial Survey Service. Proposals for the constitution of such a service have consequently been submitted to the Government of India.

Training of Munsifs.

Lastly, reference may be made to an interesting innovation in connection with settlement work. One of the outstanding features of Sir Andrew's policy was to associate the executive and judicial officers more closely in the general administration of the Province, the basis of the association being mutual understanding. This policy was applied, with good results, to the Settlement Department by adopting a scheme for training Munsifs in settlement work. The principle underlying the scheme is that officers who discharge judicial functions should not only know the Acts borne on the statute-book and the commentaries on the law,

but also understand the system of revenue administration and have a practical knowledge of revenue procedure. If it is important that revenue officers should have some knowledge of civil and criminal law and procedure, it is certainly not less necessary that judicial officers should have some knowledge of revenue law and procedure and of the varied problems of district administration. A training of Munsifs in settlement work seemed most likely to secure this object. At the same time, His Honour believed that the officers so trained could hardly fail to derive benefit in their ordinary work from the knowledge of the records, and of agrarian conditions generally, which settlement experience would give them, and that the Judicial Department would thereby obtain a clear acquaintance with the work of the Revenue Department. These views were accepted by the High Court; and with its consent arrangements were made for the temporary deputation of Munsifs to settlement work.

Under this scheme six of the younger Munsifs are selected every year to undergo a course of training in settlement lasting for 18 months. The course is a practical one, beginning with cadastral survey and ending with the disposal of rent settlement cases and title disputes filed after final publication. During their training, the deputed Munsifs make acquaintance with every branch of settlement work and see in detail how the settlement record is prepared. At the end of their training, care is taken to post them to districts already brought under settlement, where their special knowledge is likely to be most useful. So far the experiment has been attended with marked success. The selected Munsifs have usually been officers with more than average physical and mental capacity, who have readily volunteered to undergo the course of training. They have nearly all done well on settlement; and it is certain that, on their reversion to general duty, they have carried back with them a fuller appreciation of the value and accuracy of the settlement record than was commonly entertained by their brother Munsifs a decade ago.

ECONOMIC ENQUIRIES.

Fisheries.

Of all the enquiries initiated by Sir Andrew Fraser, that concerned with the possibility of improving and developing the fisheries of Bengal is perhaps likely to bear most fruit. The importance of the subject can, at any rate, scarcely be

overestimated. For in Bengal fish largely takes the place of meat, and the number of fish-eaters in the Province is estimated at 40 millions or four-fifths of the total population. Fish is especially necessary as an article of food among a people whose principal food-grain is rice; and there are thousands of people who do not taste meat even once in a year, but who have fish, whenever they can get it, with their principal meals, twice a day. For their supply there is every natural advantage. Not only are there numerous great rivers, lakes, *jhils* and tanks, but, in the rains, the whole country may be regarded practically as a vast inland fishery. The estuaries of the rivers and tidal creeks in the Sundarbans are an additional source of fish supply; and there is also an extensive seaboard. In spite of these natural advantages, the supply of fish in this Province is unequal to the demand, and is far smaller than it is in the British Isles. Not only so, but there is reason to fear that the supply is actually diminishing. This is due partly to the reclamation of *jhils* for cultivation and to the deterioration of tanks, and partly to the wasteful destruction of breeding fish and fry, and the absence of attempts at artificial propagation. No systematic efforts have hitherto been made to conserve and develop the fisheries on modern and scientific lines; nor have all the available sources of supply been exploited. The present supply comes almost entirely from the inland fisheries, and the magnificent fishing grounds in the estuaries and the open sea remain practically untouched.

In order to ascertain what could be done to remedy this unsatisfactory state of affairs, Sir Andrew Fraser placed Mr. K. G. Gupta, then Member of the Board of Revenue, on special duty in August 1906. Mr. Gupta made extensive enquiries throughout the Province, and subsequently was placed on special duty to study in Europe and America various important questions connected with fishery administration, and especially the measures which are there taken to improve, by artificial means, the natural supply of fish. The results of his enquiries in Bengal, Europe and America are embodied in two valuable reports, which are a storehouse of information on the subject. Briefly, it may be stated that Mr. Gupta has shown that for the fresh water fisheries no new methods of capture are needed. What is here required is artificial propagation coupled perhaps with a system of short close seasons and other protective measures. In the estuaries and open sea, on the other hand, it is necessary for Government to lead the way, and to find out

where the fish are to be found and how they should be caught and brought to market. This pioneer action is being taken by Government; and to encourage private enterprise, sanction has been obtained to a rebate of the duty on salt used for fish-curing. A steam trawler, the *Golden Crown*, has been brought out from England and is now carrying on the work of exploration and investigation in the Bay of Bengal. It is hoped by this means to ascertain where the more valuable bottom fish congregate, and where and at what seasons the shoals of migratory fish appear. The enquiries begun by Mr. K. G. Gupta are being continued under Mr. A. Ahmad, an experienced District Officer, and an Advisory Board on Fisheries has been constituted. Arrangements are also being made for experiments in the artificial propagation, by European methods, of *rahu*, *katla* and other members of the carp family in Bengal. In order to assist in this work and in other matters of a technical nature, a fishery expert is being obtained from America, and it is proposed to send two young men, one to Europe and the other to America, to study fishery under competent teachers.

Labour-supply.

Another important economic matter which came into prominence during Sir Andrew Fraser's administration was the question of labour-supply. Complaints were general that there was shortness of labour for the large industries in Calcutta and its neighbourhood; and His Honour felt that more might be done by Government to make known in the congested districts of Bengal the great market available for their surplus labour. Accordingly, in his first year of office, His Honour promised to assist the mercantile community, if his assistance was required, to solve the difficulty of the labour question and advance the cause of industrial progress and development. It was, however, decided to wait until the matter had been discussed at a Conference of the Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce held early in 1905. The members of that Conference came to the conclusion that the supply of labour for organized industries was inadequate in many parts, and that the deficiency seriously restricted the productive power of a large number of manufacturing concerns. They therefore recommended that an enquiry should be made by Government to ascertain the causes of the scarcity of labour. The Government of India accepted their proposal, so far as it affected the supply of labour for handling goods in Calcutta, and for mines, mills, factories and similar industries in Bengal, and asked the Lieutenant-Governor to depute an officer to conduct the enquiry. Sir Andrew was entirely

in accord with this decision, and (in 1905) appointed a special officer, Mr. B. Foley, I.C.S., to make the investigation required.

The result of the enquiry was to show that, on the whole, the supply of unskilled labour was equal to the demand except during the three hot weather months, when the labourers return to their homes; but in the case of coal mines the supply was inadequate, chiefly at the seasons when paddy is being transplanted and reaped. With regard to skilled labour, there was evidence of the insufficiency of the number, and the inefficiency of the work, of the local artizans, the enormous industrial expansion of Calcutta and its neighbourhood having created a demand which the supply had failed to meet. A number of workmen from China, the Punjab and other parts of India have consequently to be employed at high wages.

This change of *personnel* is a noticeable feature of the altering conditions of industrial labour in Bengal. To quote from the remarks which a Member of Council, well qualified to speak on the subject, made in the last Budget Debate presided over by Sir Andrew:—"It is certainly a fact, which my experience has proved, that the Bengali carpenter is being slowly, but surely, supplanted by his Chinese competitor. Again, speaking from my own experience, this gradual dying out of the Bengali carpenter is very materially due not only to his lack of training, but also to the disinclination of parents to let their children follow the calling of mechanics. I have known several instances of Bengali carpenters, in my own employ, bringing their sons to me to be taken on as clerks in my office, with an Entrance or First Arts qualification. Twenty-five years ago, our workmen were nearly all Bengali Hindus, and there was not a single Chinaman in our employ and only one or two Muhammadans. Now we have a large number of Chinamen, and among the Indians the Bengalis are in a very small minority. The Chinaman, it is true, gets larger wages, but he earns his money to the hilt; works steadily; takes only one or at most two holidays in the year; is sober, punctual and intelligent, and does not need to be continually urged to his work. The Bengali, I am constrained to say, is very much to the contrary. He gets small wages certainly, but he earns for his employer even less than he gets. As a rule, he takes little or no real interest in his work, and if not carefully watched, will scamp his job." The same failure on the part of the Bengali to hold his own in large industries is apparent in the jute mills. "Twenty years ago," writes

Mr. Foley, "all the hands were Bengalis, but they have gradually been replaced by Hindustanis from the United Provinces and Bihar. These men have been found more regular, stronger, steadier and more satisfactory generally, so that at present in most of the mills two-thirds of the hands are composed of up-country men." In cotton mills, however, the Bengali and Uriya still hold their own.

As regards the means of obtaining a solution of the labour difficulty, Government held that its active association in the direct recruitment of labour would be looked upon with suspicion by the labourer, and that it would be impossible for it to guarantee the promises of recruiters without an amount of intervention which would be objectionable. There would be the further difficulty of holding the balance fairly between the different industries and between different employers engaged in the same industry. They were therefore strongly of the opinion that there should be no direct interference by Government in the supply of labour. At the same time, it was decided that Government should assist the mercantile community by collecting information to be placed at the disposal of the industries concerned as to the conditions obtaining in the labour-recruiting districts. A close examination of those conditions had already been made by the special officer, the areas favourable for recruitment had been pointed out, and suggestions made as to the best means of attracting and retaining labour. This information was of value, for the difficulties experienced in obtaining and keeping an adequate supply of labour were largely due to the fact that employers of labour were not aware of the most suitable places in which to recruit their men, and were not always sufficiently alive to the need for adopting necessary precautions in order to retain them after recruitment. To supplement this information and to bring it up to date, orders were passed that the Bengal and Upper India Chambers of Commerce should be supplied with half-yearly bulletins or statements showing for each district the state of the local labour market, and also with statements showing, in the case of impending scarcity or famine, in what districts it is apprehended, what classes are likely to be most affected, and how long the distress will probably last.

Factory labour.

A third and, within its limited sphere, most important economic enquiry was made in the cold weather of 1907-08 by the Indian Factory Labour Commission appointed by the Secretary of State for India. The enquiry of the Commission extended to all factories in India; but the following extract from their report, which is particularly applicable to

Bengal, may be quoted as illustrating the conditions of factory life in this Province :—"The habits of the Indian factory operative are determined by the fact that he is primarily an agriculturist, or a labourer on the land. In almost all cases his hereditary occupation is agriculture; his home is in the village from which he comes, not in the city in which he labours; his wife and family ordinarily continue to live in that village; he regularly remits a portion of his wages there; and he returns there periodically to look after his affairs, and to obtain rest after the strain of factory life. There is as yet practically no factory population, such as exists in European countries, consisting of a large number of operatives trained from their youth to one particular class of work, and dependent upon employment at that work for their livelihood. It follows that the Indian operative is, in general, independent of factory work, to the extent that he does not rely exclusively upon factory employment in order to obtain a livelihood; at most seasons he can command a wage sufficient to keep him, probably on a somewhat lower scale of comfort, by accepting work on the land; and there are also numerous other avenues of employment, more remunerative than agricultural labour, which are open to every worker in any large industrial centre. If the operative is not merely a landless labourer, he will in general be bound by strong ties to the land and to the village from which he originally came; he can at any time abandon factory life in order to revert to agriculture; and the claims of the village where he has a definite and accepted position are in practice, as experience has shown, sufficiently powerful to recall him from city life for a period which extends, on the average, to at least a month in each year. The Bombay operative, resident in the Konkan, probably returns to his village for one month each year; and the jute weaver of Bengal working longer hours and earning higher wages, is not content with less than two or three months. Whenever factory life becomes irksome, the operative can return to his village; there is probably always work of some kind for him there if he wishes it; and in most cases he is secured against want by the joint family system. The position of the operative has been greatly strengthened by the fact that the supply of factory labour undoubtedly is, and has been, inadequate; and there is, and has been, the keenest competition among employers to secure a full labour-supply. These two main causes—the independence of the Indian labourer, owing to the fact that he possesses other and congenial

means of earning a livelihood, and the deficient labour-supply—govern the whole situation."

To this it should be added that of late years large employers of labour in Bengal have begun to establish small colonies of employés near the mills, and these should serve to secure at least a permanent nucleus of their labour force. To quote again from the Factory Labour Commission's Report:—"In Calcutta most of the textile mills have built commodious settlements near the mill premises for large numbers of their operatives. In these settlements the workers are comfortably housed at rents which average only 12 annas a room per month, and the general opinion, which is supported in the case of one mill by actual statistics, is that the provision of house accommodation undoubtedly renders the labour-supply more regular and forms a considerable attraction to new recruits."

POLICE.

It is on record that Sir Andrew Fraser's predecessor, Sir John Woodburn, was convinced that in no branch of the administration of Bengal was improvement so imperatively required as in the police. "There is," he said, "no part of our system of government of which such universal and bitter complaint is made, and none in which, for the relief of the people and the reputation of government, is reform in anything like the same degree so urgently called for. . . The improvement of the police must, in the interests of the people and of good government, take precedence of every other project in Bengal." It was therefore fortunate for the Province that Sir Andrew, who had been President of the Police Commission, should, as Lieutenant-Governor, be in a position to introduce the reforms which the Commission had recommended.

The principal objects of the recommendations made by the Commission were (1) so to improve the pay of the police as to place them above pressing temptation to wrong-doing; (2) to secure better material, especially in the higher ranks of the service; and (3) to strengthen and improve the supervising and controlling establishment. Their recommendations were accepted in the main by the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, with whose policy they were in accord—"a policy that will raise the standard of the only emblem of authority that the majority of the people see, and will free

them from petty diurnal tyranny and oppression." To quote again from one of Lord Curzon's speeches, this ideal was to be attained by having a "police force, which is free from the temptation to corruption and iniquity, and which must therefore be reasonably well paid, which must be intelligent, orderly and efficient, and which will make its motto protection instead of oppression." It is unnecessary to enter into details regarding the administrative changes introduced in order to give effect to this policy; but their general nature may be indicated. The pay of the force has been increased, especially in the lower ranks; a better class of officer has been recruited, particularly in the higher ranks; and the supervising and controlling establishment has been strengthened. Briefly, the service has been rendered more attractive and, at the same time, more efficient.

The interest which Sir Andrew showed in the reform of the police and his efforts to promote their best interests earned for him in Bengal the title of "the friend of the police." Only a year before this name was applied to him, His Honour had been greeted by a representative body of his old Province as "the friend of the people," one whom they loved and who loved them. He accepted both titles as implying a verbal distinction and no difference, because in the administration of the police he aimed at securing the good of the people, by purifying it, by removing its defects, and by making it a worthy instrument of Government. This was the consideration he kept in view in regulating the relations between the police and the judicial courts. He made it a practice personally to consider any remarks regarding the conduct of the police in investigations that might be made in any judgment by any court and forwarded to the Magistrate of any district in the Province. While realizing that such criticism was often valuable in bringing to notice mistakes and misconduct on the part of the police, he found that in some cases it was vague and based on inadequate data. Such hasty condemnation or denunciation of the police tended to rouse feelings of resentment in the minds of the superior officers of those attacked, and so, by creating friction between the judicial and executive services defeated the object His Honour aimed at, viz., that misconduct on the part of the police should be brought promptly to notice, the guilty as promptly punished, and malpractices removed.

For such friction His Honour desired to substitute cordial co-operation between these important services, in order to improve the standard of criminal justice, to improve the

purity and efficiency of police administration, and also to ensure and maintain the confidence of the public in that administration. Accordingly, after consulting the High Court, His Honour issued orders calculated to secure the objects in view. He pointed out that he had no desire to suggest that criticisms on the conduct of the police made by judicial officers in their judgments should be discouraged when made on good grounds and with a due sense of responsibility. He expressed his full recognition of the fact that, when it appeared to a judicial officer in the course of a trial that the conduct of a police officer was open to suspicion, called for explanation, or demanded enquiry, it was often necessary that the circumstances should be noticed in the judgment. But it was equally necessary that there should be an improvement in the procedure by which such remarks were brought to the notice of the executive authorities, so that the latter might have definite facts on which they might base a sifting enquiry.

The steps taken to improve the existing procedure and the policy underlying them cannot be better summarized than by quoting the following remarks made on this subject by Sir Andrew in a recent speech :—"I value very highly the criticism of the Judges, not of the Judges merely who speak smooth things, but of the Judges who are able to bring to notice real defects or malpractices. I desire that the criticism of the courts should be effective and that it should not be trifled with. I have stated the value that I attach to the criticism of the courts; I have expressed my opinion that, when it is necessary to make such criticism in the judgment, it should be made, and I have added that when a Judge does not regard it as necessary to make such criticism in the judgment, he should then communicate separately with the executive as to any doubts that he may have regarding the action of the police. Another suggestion that I have made is this—that any remarks made by the courts should not be finally dealt with by the executive until the Judge has again seen the explanation offered and made any remarks that he thinks necessary to make. The reason why I have done this is that, seeing, as I have seen, all the remarks made by the Judges, I have known these remarks are sometimes vague and end in no definite enquiry, and that the matter is often disposed of practically without anything being done. I also find that the explanation of the police officer is forwarded by the Magistrate to higher executive authority without the Judge having seen it at all. This sometimes leads to the police being

absolved of blame when a fuller enquiry might have led to different results. It manifestly prevents the Government from deriving the advantage which it ought to derive from the criticism of the courts. The object of the criminal courts is the efficient administration of criminal justice. The police are deeply concerned in the same great object. There is something utterly wrong somewhere, if these two authorities, aiming at the same object, cannot work together. I want to see the assistance of the courts made more valuable and effective; and I want to see it cordially welcomed by those who are responsible for the efficiency of the police."

The police libel suits.

The intentions of His Honour in this matter were much misrepresented at the time, and there was a similar misconception regarding his action in connection with what were known as the Police libel suits. These suits arose as follows. In May 1905 there was a murder case in Calcutta known as the Sova Bazar murder case, in connection with which the investigating officers were severely criticized by the press, though the Judge who tried the case had not condemned them. Certain newspapers went further, and published articles of a defamatory character charging them with acts amounting to criminal offences, *e.g.*, suborning of witnesses, perjury, corruption, conspiracy, etc. The Commissioner of Police was thereupon called for a report on the matter; and his report was examined by two of the Lieutenant-Governor's legal advisers, who also made an independent and careful examination of all the facts of the case. Both were of opinion that the police were not guilty of the offences charged against them. His Honour also was convinced that the charges were baseless; and, when the police officers concerned applied for permission to vindicate their characters publicly by bringing suits for libel against the newspapers, he sanctioned their request, on condition that the papers were first allowed an opportunity of apologising. At the same time, he directed that the police officers should in the first instance be left to institute the suits at their own expense, but promised that, if the suits were decided in their favour, they would be reimbursed.

The papers declined to make any apology which it was possible to accept. They prepared to fight the case; and, apparently trusting to the fact that the police officers concerned were men of small means, they fought in a manner which involved much expense. In consequence of this, after the suits had commenced, the police officers represented that they were unable to bear the cost of the proceedings.

Government then undertook to meet their legal expenses in consideration of the fact that the charges made against them referred to acts done in the execution of their duty and were of such a character as to impair their efficiency if not rebutted. The outcome of the suit which was brought to trial fully justified the action of Government. The Judge of the High Court who tried the case gave judgment condemning this style of criticism, and deciding in favour of the police officers. He awarded them reasonable damages and costs. There had been no suggestion that heavy damages should be given. On appeal, his finding was confirmed by a full bench of the High Court.

After the suits had been decided, an attempt was made by a section of the press to stir up a campaign against the Government for guarding the interests of its officers. The attempt failed. But in spite of this, some newspapers continued to misrepresent the action of Sir Andrew Fraser and to insinuate that he was prompted by a desire to stifle public criticism. The latter insinuation was particularly unfair. For, ever since he assumed charge of his office, His Honour had been careful to invite criticism and to study public opinion. Apart from this, Sir Andrew made it a regular practice to have allegations against Government officers, whether in the police or other departments, made the subject of careful enquiry, if *prima facie* they appeared to require investigation. And when the officer concerned was found guilty, he did not fail to inflict appropriate punishment. Some idea of the extent to which discipline in the police force was enforced may be gathered from the fact that, in the three years 1904-06, 108 officers and 1,554 men were dismissed, and 1,078 officers and 7,115 men received other punishment.

As regards the action of Government in meeting the expenses of litigation, it may be pointed out that the matter had been carefully enquired into by the Lieutenant-Governor's legal advisers, who expressed the decided opinion that the police officers concerned were innocent of the charges which had been made against them. It was quite clear that, unless Government assisted the police officers, want of funds would prevent them from pursuing the suits and clearing their characters of the aspersions which had been cast upon them. As the action which formed the basis of these unfounded allegations had been taken by them in the execution of their duty, and in their official capacity as Government servants, it appeared to the Lieutenant-Governor to be incumbent on Government to assist them; and this

action was in accordance with the rules issued many years before.

Administrative changes.

The preceding account indicates the general lines of Sir Andrew's policy in the administration of the police; and it will suffice to mention briefly some of the more important measures by which it was brought into effect. Those measures necessitated a large increase in the cadre and a revision of the pay of all ranks, the annual cost of the changes effected up to January 1908 being, in round figures, 15½ lakhs (3 lakhs for the superior cadre and 12½ lakhs for the subordinate ranks), while the annual cost of the changes still to be effected is 8½ lakhs. In the superior cadre a third post of Deputy Inspector-General has been created, and the districts of Bengal have been divided into three Ranges known as the Presidency, Burdwan and Bihar Ranges, with headquarters at Cuttack, Ranchi and Bankipore, respectively. The appointment of Deputy Inspector-General of Crimes and Railways has also been created, and the control of the Railway Police has been transferred to him from the Deputy Inspectors-General of the different Ranges. In accordance with the recommendations of the Police Commission, a grade of Deputy Superintendent has been included in the superior cadre, the officers appointed to this post being statutory natives of India drawn from two classes, viz., (1) Inspectors of Police and (2) candidates for direct appointment, who are selected from the nominations made by Commissioners of Divisions, and who must have an University degree. In the subordinate ranks, the system of recruiting Sub-Inspectors by means of a competitive examination has been abolished. Candidates are now nominated in the first instance by District Nomination Committees, consisting of the District Magistrate, Deputy Inspector-General of the Range, and Superintendent of Police; and a list of selected candidates is finally placed before the Inspector-General, who personally selects the cadets. The appointments are distributed among the Divisions in proportion to the strength of the investigating force entertained, and preference is given to natives of each, and also to graduates and undergraduates with special regard to their family and respectability. A certain proportion (15 per cent.), however, of the vacancies are filled by promotion from the ranks.

For the training of constables and head-constables three training schools were established in 1905 on the lines recommended by the Police Commission, one at Nathnagar in the Bhagalpur district for the training of up-country men, and the other at Purulia for the training of Bengalis; the

latter was removed to Berhampore in 1907. In 1907 a third school intended primarily for recruits from the aboriginal tribes of Chota Nagpur was established at Ranchi. The training school for Assistant Superintendents and Sub-Inspectors of Police was also removed to Ranchi in the same year and placed in charge of an officer of the rank of Superintendent of Police. Two other important reforms may be mentioned. Firstly, the armed police in the districts has been strengthened and placed under European Inspectors, who have served in the British army, with a consequent increase of efficiency. Secondly, the force of town chaukidars in municipalities is being replaced by constables of the regular force. The system previously in force was very unsatisfactory. The town chaukidars did constables' work, but were unsuitable substitutes, especially in Bengal proper. The so-called chaukidars in many municipalities were foreigners without any local knowledge; while they had frequently as hard work to do as ordinary constables, but were paid less, were supervised less, and were less efficiently trained.

Criminal Investigation Department.

Perhaps however the most important administrative reform has been the establishment of the Criminal Investigation Department, the duties of which are the collection and dissemination of information regarding professional crime and criminals, assisting in the local investigation of such crime and the detection of such criminals, etc. The inadequacy of the arrangements previously made may be realized from the fact that up to 1903 work of this class was done only by a reserve of police officers, insufficient both in strength and constitution, attached to the office of the Inspector-General, which undertook investigation of serious cases which the District Police were unable to deal with. What valuable work has been done by the Department since its establishment may be realized from the annual administration reports:—In one small district alone eight gangs of professional dacoits have been broken up, one of which, with 76 members, dated back to the Mutiny, when it waylaid a body of mutineers and stripped them of their arms and loot. Recently, too, work of incalculable value has been done in detecting gangs of anarchists and embryo rebels.

Village police.

As President of the Police Commission Sir Andrew Fraser had occasion to review the system of village police in Bengal. It appeared to him to have many defects: In his opinion, the system was not a system of village police as generally understood, but was "more of the nature of a low-paid regular constabulary with the one small redeeming feature that each constable resides in his own village and

must be more or less subject to the influence of village opinion." At the same time, His Honour made allowance for the peculiar circumstances of Bengal, in which the problem of village government differs materially from that affecting other parts of India. The village community has not been maintained as it has elsewhere; and owing to the Permanent Settlement, Bengal has a very much smaller revenue establishment than any other Province. In respect of police administration, in particular, village government in Bengal is represented by the *panchayat* appointed to the local unit constituting a village as defined in Act VI (B.C.) of 1870, together with the force of chaukidars serving therein under the intermediate supervision of a *dafadar*. The connection between the regular police force and the rural watch has always been a close one; and the tendency of later legislation has been to render the control of the District Magistrate, usually as exercised through the police, more effective and direct. In fact, apart from the police, the District Officer has hitherto had no readily available agency through which to exercise the supervision which experience has shown to be required. The system appeared to Sir Andrew to be defective in that it failed to secure the co-operation of the people; it set aside the *panchayat* from control of the village police; and it made the latter not the servants of the village but the instruments of the constabulary.

Influenced by these considerations, Sir Andrew announced at an early period in his administration that he regarded the development of village government as probably the most important reform to be undertaken in the Province. He had the whole question examined by the Commissioners' Conference, and placed a senior officer, Mr. H. Savage, C.S.I., and on his departure from the Province, one of his ablest officers, Mr. H. Wheeler, I.C.S., on special duty to make enquiries into the existing state of affairs and the reforms practicable. As a result of these enquiries, steps have been taken to reorganize the village police, so as to place them more directly under representatives of the villagers, by a tax on whom they are paid. The main principles kept in view have been the selection of the most reliable representatives of the locality as members of the village *panchayat*; their sympathetic supervision, both in order to ensure the equitable exercise of the considerable powers for good or ill given them over their fellow villagers, and to obtain their assistance in collecting local information and managing local affairs; the fuller utilization of the *dafadar* as a link between the chaukidars and the police; and a more effective

control over the chaukidar, especially in the matter of watch and ward. Also, a revised Chaukidari Manual has been issued, in order that a more definite procedure in the administration of the system may be adopted in place of the varying practices which were previously current, partly owing to the discretion which the law left in some respects to local officers, but also to the absence of explicit instructions of Government on various points of which actual experience has demonstrated the necessity.

The most important measure taken to improve the system of rural police, and to resuscitate the system of village government, consists in the development of the village *panchayat*. Sir Andrew's view was that if village government is ever to be developed into a reality, it will be by securing the services of the most trustworthy local talent which may be forthcoming and by developing its utility under sympathetic supervision. More influential men have been appointed to the *panchayats;* their status has been raised; and their position as assistants of Government officers in village affairs has been recognized. The Presidents have been appointed *ex-officio* visitors of those primary schools which are aided from public funds or are under public management, of pounds, public ferries and public *sarais* in the Union. In more advanced districts, where the standard of local intelligence is higher, much of the control hitherto exercised by the police has been transferred to the *panchayats*, and qualified Presidents have been vested with magisterial powers. The result of the experiment in these districts is awaited before the system is extended further.

Separate measures are in contemplation for the improvement of village police in Chota Nagpur, where conditions are very different from those prevailing in the rest of the Province. It is peopled mainly by aboriginal tribes and the lower Hindu castes. In the great majority of villages it would be impossible to find persons suitable to serve on *panchayats*. This fact has always been recognised; and the Chota Nagpur Rural Police Act, V (B. C.) of 1887, provides for the assessment and collection of the *chaukidari* tax, not by local *panchayats* but by *tahsildars* of whom there are usually from one to three in a thana, drawing a salary ranging from Rs. 15 to Rs. 25 per mensem, and collecting from Rs. 1,900 to Rs. 5,000 per annum. It is now proposed to amend that Act so as to improve the method of grouping villages for the purposes of assessment and the distribution of village policemen, to render the assessment more equitable, and to give legal sanction to certain procedure and rules

which in practice have been found necessary for the proper working of the Act.

A scheme for the reorganization of the Calcutta police, based on the recommendations of the Indian Police Commission was sanctioned provisionally by the Government of India in 1905 and finally by the Secretary of State in 1906. Under this scheme the force has been strengthened, and the pay and prospects of its members have been improved. Some of the chief reforms that have been effected are the increase of the pay of Indian constables and of the European constables, now called Sergeants; the increase in the number of Sergeants, Indian constables and Indian officers, who are now called Head-Constables; and the abolition of the system by which deductions were made from the pay of members of the force on account of the Superannuation Pension Fund. Such deductions ceased at the end of 1905, when by Bengal Act VI of 1905 (Calcutta and Suburban Police Superannuation Fund Act) all sums standing to the credit of the Fund were vested in Government, which has undertaken to pay all pensions and gratuities from general revenues. The number of Sub-Inspectors has been increased, and both they and the Inspectors have been regraded. The most important measures of reorganization pending are the substitution of Deputy Commissioners of Police for Superintendents of Divisions, the redivision of Calcutta into four instead of five districts, and the introduction of circles with Circle Inspectors in charge. A beginning has, however, been made by the appointment of a Deputy Commissioner in charge of the Port Police and of an Additional Deputy Commissioner. The whole question of the redistribution of beats and the allocation and augmentation of the force in such a way as to give each man one night in bed after two nights on duty, and to provide for the very heavy miscellaneous work, in addition to night watch, that the police have to perform in Calcutta, is also under consideration. Calcutta police.

Another matter taken in hand during the quinquennium of Sir Andrew's administration was the question of establishing a body of police to prevent and detect crime on the waterways of Bengal. Such crime has been common for centuries past, especially in the labyrinth of wood and water known as the Sundarbans: even at the close of the 16th century the first Jesuit missionaries that visited Bengal described this tract as infested by dacoits, and said that they encountered great dangers both from them and from tigers. Coming to more recent times, we find it stated in Hamilton's *Description of Hindostan* (1820) that dacoity or gang robbery, "the scourge River police.

under which Bengal suffered from the first acquisition of the Province," had, "for an astonishing period of time, baffled the united efforts of every department of the service." It was claimed that, if not eradicated, it had been greatly diminished, even in the Sundarbans, which were "peculiarly adapted for the reception and concealment of river pirates." Yet in 1823, Bishop Heber relates, "a numerous band of dacoits or river pirates" attacked and looted Serampore, not without loss, for the Danish Colonel took some prisoners, whom he hanged next morning. Between 1830 and 1836 several dangerous gangs of river pirates were broken up by the Thuggi and Dacoity Department, but in 1858 it was found necessary to appoint a board of itinerant Magistrates styled the Dacoity Commissioners, who moved about the country in boats dealing summary justice to all river thieves. In 1860 the Commissioners were abolished on the ground that the newly-raised police force should be able to deal efficiently with the evil. But this hope was disappointed, and owing to the frequency of robberies on the Hooghly and in the Sundarbans, a special body of river police force had to be organized. This also was abolished in 1867, and though a force of patrol boats was maintained as part of the regular police establishment, robbery and murder on the water routes continued.

The subject of river crime does not appear to have attracted much notice till 1899, when certain newspapers drew attention to it. A series of important Conferences were then held in 1900 and 1901; and next year two special officers were deputed to make enquiries. The result of their enquiries may be gathered from the remarks of the Police Commission:—"It has recently been brought to light that a great mass of dacoity and other serious crime is committed upon the large navigable rivers of Bengal and Assam. Very little of this crime is reported to the police, partly owing to the fear of the criminals, partly owing to an unwillingness to break a journey, and partly because the sufferers have no confidence in the ability of the police to help them and are unwilling to devote time and trouble to assisting in enquiries which they feel will prove fruitless. This serious blot upon police administration must be removed and the rivers must be made as safe as the public highways." No complete scheme, however, had been worked out, and the Government of India therefore directed that the Governments concerned should examine the whole question with a view to formulating a practicable scheme. In 1904 Mr. Bramley of the United Provinces Police and Mr. Macnamara of the Bengal Police

were placed on special duty to follow up the enquiries previously made. Their investigations disclosed a serious state of affairs; among other things, it came to light that about 2,500 criminals resident in the United Provinces came habitually into Bengal, in the guise of peaceful river traders, in order to commit crime ranging from theft to dacoity. And there were only 31 patrol boats, most of which were useless to check crime, being so slow and unwieldy that it was practically impossible to take river pirates unawares.

It was recognized that further action was imperative; and the Bengal Government determined to cope with the evil vigorously. A scheme involving an expenditure of nearly two lakhs a year was accordingly drawn up, in consultation with the Governments of the United Provinces and Assam, and submitted (in August 1904) to the Government of India. That Government held that the scheme was deficient in two respects. The registration of trade boats had not been fully considered, nor had the river steamer companies been approached. In both directions commercial interests of importance were involved, which called for careful consideration. They directed that further enquiries should be made, and in the meantime sanctioned, as a provisional and temporary measure, the appointment of a force to form the nucleus of an effective river police.

Mr. Bramley and Mr. Plowden of the Bengal Police were now deputed to make further investigations and assist in maturing detailed proposals. Exhaustive enquiries were made in Assam, Bengal and the United Provinces; and the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, the Marwari Association, the Agents of the River Steamer Companies and the Insurance Companies were freely consulted. Before the enquiries were concluded, however, the new Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam was created. The police establishments had to be redistributed; and, as there was nothing to be gained by enlisting a special force without adequate equipment, before appropriate rules and regulations could be framed for their guidance, the raising of the proposed nucleus force was kept in abeyance. The whole situation moreover was changed, so far as Bengal was concerned, the localities chiefly affected being included in the new Province. The completion of the report giving the result of the enquiries made was delayed by other causes, which need not be mentioned here; and it will suffice to say that in January 1908 a Conference, presided over by the Chief Secretary, and attended, among others, by the Inspectors General of Bengal, the United Provinces, and Eastern Bengal

and Assam, was held to discuss Mr. Bramley's report and to consider the question of reorganizing the river police. The most important decision arrived at was that the principle of Provincial boundaries was to be maintained and that each Province should recruit a force of river police according to its requirements. In Bengal this matter has already been taken in hand, and a detailed scheme is under preparation.

JAILS.

Sanitary progress.

One of the most satisfactory features of jail administration during the quinquennium was the steady decrease in the death-rate among the inmates of jails. The marginal table will show sufficiently how continuously mortality has decreased in the last 30 years; but two points call for special notice. (1) The decrease has been specially marked during the last four years, the jail mortality for 1907 being the lowest on record; and (2) the death-rate has been far below that for the Province as a whole. It is of some interest in this connection to recall the fact that nearly half a century ago Dr. F. J. Mouat, the then head of the Jail Department and the foremost sanitarian in India at that time, stated that he looked forward to the time when the death-rate of the prison population in malarious Bengal would be reduced to 50 per mille. The death-rate passed this modest limit more than twenty years ago. Its diminution is due to the introduction of common sense hygiene into jails by Dr. Mouat, whose work was carried on by Sir Alfred Lethbridge and his successors, aided, and indeed rendered only possible, by the care and attention given to their jails by the Jail Superintendents. The result is testimony to the unremitting attention paid to sanitation, and affords an object lesson of what persistent and common sense sanitation can effect even in a malarious tropical province.

Years.	Death-rate per mille.	
	In jails (daily average strength).	In Bengal.
1875—1879 ...	65	...
1880—1884 ...	61	...
1885—1889 ...	44	...
1890—1894 ...	36	...
1895—1899 ...	26	...
1900—1904 ...	26	33·42
1905 ...	24	38·53
1906 ...	23	36·08
1907 ...	17·5	37·72

The marked decrease in recent years may be fairly ascribed to the numerous sanitary improvements effected

during this quinquennium, in which Lieutenant-Colonel W. J. Buchanan, I.M.S., held office. Sir Andrew, in the course of his early tours, visited all the central and district jails in the Province and many of the subsidiary jails. He was generally accompanied by Colonel Buchanan, especially if there was any special defect suspected in regard to any jail. The improvements introduced included the provision of a better water-supply, better arrangements for segregation and quarantine, improved cook-houses, latrines of an improved pattern, better ventilation of barracks, etc. Owing to such reforms, plague has been practically kept out of the jails, and also cholera and small-pox; although every year a few cases occur among under-trial prisoners and newly-admitted prisoners, who have become infected before they come inside the jail. This is unavoidable; but in no case have any of these diseases been able to get a footing. The imported cases have been promptly isolated, and the diseases have not been allowed to spread. Malarial fevers also have become much less fatal; and strenuous endeavours have been and are being made in all jails to combat malaria by modern methods. The incidence of dysentery, once the bugbear and also the opprobrium of jails in Bengal, has been very considerably reduced, and the mortality has largely decreased. The decline has been especially noticeable in the Midnapore jail, where investigations into the causation of dysentery have been carried out, and the method of vaccine therapy has been introduced (in 1907). The results give good grounds for the hope that it may be possible to limit, in future, the incidence of this disease, of which Bengal seems peculiarly the hot-bed.

Under-trial prisoners.

Besides helping to advance the cause of jail sanitation, Sir Andrew Fraser introduced several important changes in the system of jail administration. One of the first matters taken up by His Honour was the separation of under-trial from recently-convicted prisoners. A certain laxity had crept in with regard to this important matter, owing to certain special circumstances. The outbreak of plague had led to the issue of stricter orders for the separation of newly-admitted prisoners from the general body of convicts. The only place, however, which could be found for the separation of one class of male adult convicts from the rest, was the under-trial prisoners' ward. Consequently, as it was then considered more important to keep out plague than to separate prisoners recently convicted from prisoners awaiting trial, the practice grew up of keeping prisoners under trial and prisoners just convicted in the same ward or enclosure for the first ten days of their detention.

His Honour noticed this practice during his visits to district jails. He pointed out that it was not a satisfactory arrangement and that prisoners awaiting trial should always be kept apart from convicted prisoners. At the same time, segregation on medical grounds was also imperative on account of the danger threatening from plague; and it was necessary therefore to set apart wards and enclosures entirely for the use of convicts newly received into jail, either on conviction in the local courts or on transfer from other jails. Steps to remedy this defect were at once taken; and arrangements have now been made in all jails for the separation of prisoners awaiting trial from those who have been convicted.

Another reform carried out has been the separation of different classes of prisoners. When the majority of the jails in Bengal were built 30 or 40 years ago, no attempt was made to provide separate accommodation for the different classes of prisoners. Arrangements were made only to separate males from females, and convicts from prisoners under trial. But within the last five years arrangments have been made for the separation of A class (or casual) convicts from B class (or habitual) convicts, and juvenile prisoners from both. Such separation is now well carried out in the majority of jails; but in a few smaller jails it is still impossible at times of overcrowding. Difficult as it was to carry out this reform in the sleeping wards and barracks, it was even more difficult in the workshops; but in this direction also much has been done, and in many jails new workshops have been built for the purpose. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the erection of new workshops and of new buildings for the purpose of segregation, etc., has, in a large number of jails, led to the extension of the outer walls, and to an increased area being provided within the four walls of the jail—an important sanitary matter not always insisted upon when the jails were built, many being, in consequence, 'site crowded.'

Subsidiary jails.

In addition to these measures for the improvement of district jails, Sir Andrew Fraser introduced an important change in the management of subsidiary jails. In the course of his first cold-weather tour through the Province, His Honour's attention was drawn to their state, which in many cases was very unsatisfactory. He also found that Magistrates generally condemned the system of subsidiary jails, as a relic of times when facilities for communications were very much less than they are at present. There was, moreover, great difficulty in giving work to prisoners and in enforcing discipline: the result being that short-term prisoners, who

should find jails especially irksome, were not subjected to rigorous imprisonment at all. Lastly, the subsidiary jails were generally overcrowded, and chiefly by prisoners awaiting trial.

As a remedial measure His Honour proposed that arrangements should be made to send all convicted prisoners to the headquarters jail of the district, where alone they could be brought under jail discipline and penal labour. The proposal was discussed by a Conference of Commissioners and Heads of Departments, and was generally approved. The main difficulty was a police one, viz., the provision of more frequent escorts to remove convicts from the subsidiary jails to the District Jails. This difficulty has, however, been overcome; and convicts are now removed daily, or thrice or twice a week, as circumstances permit, instead of only once a week as formerly. The system has worked well, and has certainly relieved the congestion in subsidiary jails; but, nevertheless, owing to the large number of prisoners awaiting trial, the latter are still often overcrowded. Many of them have, it is true, been rebuilt or enlarged, but others are still in great need of alteration. New subsidiary jails have been built for the recently constituted subdivisions at the headquarters stations of Asansol, Dhanbaid and Khunti; those at Madhubani and Tamluk have been rebuilt; and in at least a dozen others extensive alterations have been completed or are in progress. A standard type-plan has also been brought out, providing for separate accommodation for male and female convicts, a large ward for under-trial prisoners, a couple of cells for refractory prisoners, or prisoners under medical examination for alleged lunacy, and a small hospital—all features marking a great advance over the accommodation provided in the old single-ward subsidiary jails.

Another matter which came to His Honour's notice in connection with jail administration was the necessity of providing for the helpless beggars sent to prison in Calcutta —a class hitherto neglected. This question arose in consequence of a vigorous campaign against the numerous beggars who made themselves a nuisance in the metropolis. Numbers were committed to jail, and while most were sturdy rogues, others were miserable wretches, halt, maim or blind, unable either to earn a livelihood or perform prison tasks. In prison they were merely kept and fed at Government expense, and their association with real criminals did them no good. His Honour felt that something should be done for this class, and sanctioned an annual grant to a charitable institution called "The Refuge,"

which had been recently established in Calcutta for the reception of helpless beggars, in addition to a monthly stipend for the support of each beggar sent there by the police.

Juvenile convicts.

Perhaps the most interesting feature, however, of jail administration in the quinquennium was the increasing attention paid to the proper treatment of juvenile convicts. The importance of this question can scarcely be overestimated; for if youths, who are only commencing a career of crime and are of an impressionable age, are allowed to associate with adult criminals, they rapidly deteriorate and, assimilating the vices of their older companions, become habitual criminals. To prevent this, it is necessary to separate boys and youths sent to prison from adult convicts, to protect them from contaminating influences, and to bring better influences to bear on them. This is not a difficult matter in the case of girl prisoners; for they are few in number, and for some years past there has been a separate juvenile depôt for them at Bhagalpur. Attention has therefore been specially devoted to juvenile male offenders, of whom there are two main classes—(1) boys under 15 years of age, mostly boys sentenced to detention in reformatory schools and kept in jail till they can be transferred, and (2) youths and young men between 16 and 23 years of age, who are too old for a reformatory. For prisoners of these two classes juvenile wards have been established, in which they are kept separate from older prisoners. Special steps have also been taken to improve the method of treatment in such wards, particularly at Hazaribagh and Bhagalpur, the inmates being given an elementary education and taught drill and gymnastics, in addition to ordinary jail industries. Still, for want of accommodation, boys under 16 years of age, youths of 16 to 18, and young men of 18 to 22 have to be kept together in some jails. The young men or "adolescents" last mentioned are a particularly difficult class to provide for; but in all the larger jails they are kept in a separate ward and made to work in a separate work-shed.

Further measures for the treatment of youthful prisoners on advanced lines are shortly to be taken by the establishment of a special juvenile jail. This will be similar to the "juvenile adult" prison at Borstal near Chatham, which has recently been set apart for the reception of juvenile prisoners only, *i.e.*, youths past the age for reformatories or industrial schools, yet not fit to be associated with adult convicts. The need of such a jail in Bengal, and the

principles on which it will be managed, may be gathered from the remarks recorded by the Inspector-General in April 1907:—"What is wanted in Bengal is not a jail for boys of the reformatory age, but a large industrial school situated on a large farm without walls and with little more restraint than exists in a well-managed public school. Such is impossible in the walled-in small jail which now does duty for a Reformatory in Calcutta. These buildings formerly were part of the Alipore Central Jail, and I have asked for them to be returned to this Department. If this were done, we could at once start a juvenile jail for boys from 16 to 23 years; we could teach them modern trades and even jute-spinning and weaving; and in the neighbourhood of Calcutta it should not be difficult to get employment for such youths. . . . It has always seemed to me a great pity to see the procession of youths who pass from the Courts of the Presidency Magistrates to the jails in Calcutta. Such youths often get very short sentences, and the same boy may come back three or four times in a year. Imprisonment of this sort is worse than useless, and only leads to the manufacture of criminals. If a juvenile jail were at hand and such boys got sufficiently long sentences, they would be taken hold of, taught trades, and an endeavour made to get them work on release. At present, by a system of repeated petty sentences for repeated petty offences, these boys are manufactured into criminals, and year after year recruit the ranks of the Calcutta habitual thief. The time has certainly come for the taking up of this question, and a beginning can at once be made as soon as the present obsolete reformatory buildings are made over to the Jail Department."

This proposal was considered by a special Committee appointed by Sir Andrew and was again discussed at Hazaribagh during a visit which His Honour paid to that place. It was decided to hand over the buildings and grounds of the Reformatory School at Alipore to the Jail Department, and to convert them into a Juvenile Jail for the reception of youths too old for a Reformatory and too young to be allowed to live and associate with adult prisoners in a criminal jail. This is a new departure in jail management in India, and it is hoped that it may meet with the same success as in England.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

There have hitherto been two reformatory schools in Bengal situated at Alipore and Hazaribagh. The former was established in 1878, the building allotted for it being the old jail hospital of the Alipore Jail. The latter was opened in 1882 for boys resident in Bihar and Chota Nagpur, the school at Alipore being reserved for boys from Bengal proper. They were each placed under a Board of Management and were managed by the Jail Department till 1900, when they were transferred to the control of the Education Department. This change was made because it was thought that the Education Department would be more successful in managing reformatory schools, in that the latter are intended for education and reform, and not merely for punishment. At the same time, it was believed that the Department would be in a better position to help the boys to earn an honest living after they left the school, *e.g.*, by teaching them suitable handicrafts while in the school, by apprenticing them before release, and by finding employment for them after release. Closely connected with this object was the maintenance of a watch over their subsequent careers. It was felt that such surveillance was necessary in the interests of the boys themselves, in order that they might not be left entirely without help and guidance, and also in the interests of the schools, in order that it might be known how far their reforming influences had had a good effect. But year after year it became apparent that these objects were not being fully attained. A large proportion of the boys did not follow the trades taught them, a number of those licensed out proved failures, and the percentage of those who could not be traced, were unemployed, or had resumed a criminal career, was not satisfactory.

His Honour referred the question of what measures should be taken to improve the system to the Commissioners' Conference; and then, in 1905, appointed a strong Committee consisting of Government officers and representative European and Indian gentlemen (presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Pargiter), to consider the policy to be adopted with regard both to reformatory schools and the treatment of juvenile offenders, particularly in respect of the class of criminals to be sent to the schools, their management there, and their treatment after discharge. The Committee held an exhaustive enquiry and submitted a valuable report in

which a number of important suggestions were made for the reform of the system. As regards the management of boys while in the schools, sound principles were laid down for improving their training. In the case of boys licensed out during the latter years of their detention, one chief cause of failure was the fact that they earned wages too small for their support. The result was that this system, which is intended to prepare them for full freedom and help them to procure employment on release, was not as successful as could be desired. This defect has now been removed by the grant of allowances sufficient, with their earnings, to give them at least a living wage.

On the important question of the after careers of the boys, the Committee found that the expectations entertained when the reformatories were transferred to the Education Department had not been fulfilled. It had been hoped that the change would enlist more sympathy for the boys among the public, and render it easier for them to obtain employment on their release; that the reformatory schools would be better able to assist them; that the boys would feel less shame at their connection with the schools and be more willing to accept help from the schools; that the subsequent surveillance over them would be easier, and better information would be obtained about their subsequent careers. The Committee found that, though the Education Department had done its best, it had been hampered by great difficulties and limitations. "None of the anticipations," they remarked, "appear to have been realized, except perhaps the belief that the boys' feelings would be less characterized by shame. The change does not appear to have made any material difference in the business of surveillance and the procuring of better information about the boys. The other expectations have failed, because it has not been possible for the reformatories to give the boys any substantial help towards finding employment on their release, and public sympathy has not been aroused more than before. There are no private philanthropic agencies in this country, as in England, to which appeal might be made."

Steps are now being taken to improve the system of surveillance over released boys. The principles governing surveillance have been laid down, viz., police agency should never be employed; the surveillance should be as unobtrusive and as little inquisitorial as possible; in order to make the system a source of actual benefit, efforts should be made to keep every boy in view under all circumstances, *e.g.*,

where the officer charged with the duty of surveillance ascertains that a boy is out of employment, he should not be content merely to report the fact, but should use every effort to find him employment. As regards the means of making such surveillance effective and of real benefit, there has been for some time past a special Sub-Inspector of Schools to assist in maintaining a watch over such boys in Calcutta. A small special staff is also to be appointed, whose duty it will be to make themselves acquainted with the histories of released and licensed boys; to visit such boys in a friendly way as often as practicable; and to help the officers of the Education Department in aiding released boys. The system under which educational officers are primarily responsible for the watch over released boys will be maintained; but this staff will form a connecting link between the Superintendents of Reformatory Schools and the local educational officers, and help the former to keep in real touch with the boys. Monthly allowances and presents are further to be made to boys whose conduct and character are satisfactory, and the allowances are to be on a graduated scale, according to character, as an incentive to honest living.

It remains to note an important change recently decided upon with regard to the Alipore reformatory school. Shortly before Sir Andrew Fraser became Lieutenant-Governor, the Board of Management called attention to the cubicle system of this school, which was better suited for adult criminals than for boys in a reformatory. The cubicles had been built for jail prisoners; they resembled solitary cells; they were unsuitable for the purposes of a reformatory. In December 1903 the then Director of Public Instruction, Sir A. Pedler, inspected the school and reported that the area of the land was limited, the buildings unsuitable, and the cubicles insanitary. He recommended the removal of the school to a larger site in the outskirts of Calcutta, considering that no alterations or improvements could make the buildings suitable or alter their prison-like character. Sir Andrew appointed a Committee, with the Commissioner of the Presidency Division as President, to consider the question in all its bearings. This Committee agreed with the conclusions already arrived at and recommended the abandonment of the site and buildings at Alipore and the establishment of a new school on a new site. His Honour accepted their finding as to the unsuitability of the site and buildings, and came to the conclusion that the two schools should be amalgamated

As a preliminary measure, they are to be located at Hazaribagh, until a suitable site is selected and a new school built, the old buildings being converted into the juvenile adult jail already mentioned.

Juvenile offenders.

An important corollary to the reforms mentioned above was the action taken by Sir Andrew with regard to juvenile offenders, *i.e.*, offenders under 15 years of age, appearing in the Criminal Courts. Their treatment was, he felt, far from being on the right lines, and Magistrates too often failed to realize their responsibilities in trying such cases. In order to improve the existing state of affairs, His Honour gave comprehensive directions regarding the procedure to be adopted in such cases. He laid it down as a principle, to be observed in the case of every youthful offender, that the main object was to prevent his falling into habitually criminal courses or to reclaim him from such courses if he has already adopted them. To ensure its attainment, he directed that children should be tried as quickly as possible, that the utmost care should be taken to protect them while under trial from any contact with criminals, whether in Court or under detention elsewhere, and that in order to prevent such contact, bail should be freely accepted. In the next place, His Honour drew attention to the mischief done by short terms of imprisonment as a punishment for young offenders. Such sentences had been far too common. Boys of tender age were frequently found in jail sentenced to short terms; and it was a matter of common knowledge that they left jail worse than when they entered it. Nor could it be said that, in view of the powers vested in Magistrates to deal on other lines with this class of offenders, such a sentence was necessary for the ends of justice in any but exceptional cases.

His Honour's view was that such sentences were the worst form of punishment for youthful criminals, and he announced his sincere hope that they would seldom, if ever, be inflicted in Bengal. Apart, moreover, from this, he endeavoured to reduce the number of cases in which sentences of confinement were passed at all. With this object he directed a discriminating use of the powers conferred by section 562 of the Criminal Procedure Code and by the Whipping Act; and pointed out that where confinement is necessary, detention in a reformatory school is always preferable to imprisonment. Lastly, in order to ensure that cases against juvenile offenders should be treated with proper care and intelligence, His Honour directed that arrangements should, if possible, be made at every district

headquarters to have all cases of this kind tried by one and the same Magistrate, who should be one of the most responsible and experienced officers of the regular magisterial staff.

MEDICAL.

Not the least noticeable feature of Sir Andrew's administration was the greater activity of the Medical Department. Such progress was eminently desirable. A Committee appointed by Sir Ashley Eden, in 1878, to consider, among other matters connected with medical administration, the question of hospital management in Bengal had inaugurated an era of economy. Some years later, on the passing of the Municipal and Local Self-Government Acts, the management of mofussil hospitals and dispensaries was, to a large extent, handed over to local bodies, which were not only hampered by want of funds, but also in some measure unacquainted with the needs of medical institutions. Progress was consequently slow, in spite of the exertions of District Officers and Civil Surgeons. Still, much was done, though circumstances prevented many dispensaries being properly equipped and up to date, particularly in outlying places. Both Sir John Woodburn and Sir James Bourdillon had the medical cause much at heart; but they also were handicapped by financial stringency and were unable to effect as many reforms as they desired.

The general state of affairs in the interior, as seen by Sir Andrew immediately after he became Lieutenant-Governor, may be gathered from the remarks recorded by the Inspector-General of Civil Hopitals in 1904: "At my inspections I found in many instances the hospitals very defective as regards building and equipment. I found them in some cases located in old magazines, in shops, and in buildings which had been condemned for other purposes. In very many cases also the equipment was composed of obsolete apparatus such as was in use half a century ago. In every direction, however, improvements, both in buildings and equipment, are being carried out, a great deal having been done already through the exertions of District Officers and Civil Surgeons, whilst the assistance recently given by Government will do much towards modernizing the principal district hospitals. The condition of the principal hospitals at present is one of transition, much having been done towards bringing

them up to modern standards, whilst much remains to be done."

As regards the Calcutta hospitals, there can be no doubt that they were not worthy of the capital, and that with the great advance made in European countries, their defects had become accentuated. These defects were a legacy of the past, a fact which may be illustrated by one instance—that of the Presidency General Hospital. The three blocks of this hospital had been built nearly 150 years ago (between 1758 and 1768) by Kiernander, the first Protestant missionary to Bengal. The central block had been his garden-house, and, with the eastern and western blocks, was handed over in 1769-70 to the East India Company for use as a civil hospital, an European military hospital, and a hospital for sepoys. It was not till 1896 that the then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, sanctioned, on the recommendation of a special Committee, a scheme for the demolition of most of these antiquated buildings and the complete reconstruction of the hospital, as soon as funds permitted. The demolition of the last of Kiernander's buildings, involved by this scheme, was only completed during the quinquennium under review.

From the first, Sir Andrew Fraser interested himself personally in the improvement of the hospitals of the Province. Having attended, at one time, some of the medical classes in the Edinburgh University, he was much interested in medical and sanitary matters; and the large resources at his disposal, due to a series of prosperous years and a more liberal Provincial contract, enabled him to give this interest a practical shape by executing a number of long needed reforms. The local officers of Government and wealthy private individuals responded to his appeals; and this was all the more important, because in Bengal the duty of bringing medical relief to the sick poor falls mainly on the District Boards and, to a certain extent, on the people themselves. A spirit of progress was abroad. Not only were funds provided, but there was a marked increase of interest in hospital work and a greater pride in their medical institutions on the part of the more enlightened sections of the community. In Calcutta itself most of the hospitals were improved almost beyond recognition. In the mofussil, with the assistance of Government, local bodies and the public, there was a real advance, the larger institutions being modernized and rendered more efficient in respect of accommodation, equipment and methods.

Mofussil hospitals.

During the course of his tours through the Province, Sir Andrew made a point of visiting district dispensaries and

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of enquiring personally into their requirements. The defects brought to his notice were remedied as far as possible; and efforts were made to bring the hospitals in each district up to date in equipment, to provide sufficient accommodation for the patients resorting to them, and generally to make them more efficient. In order, moreover, to bring medical relief to the villagers themselves, medical officers in charge of dispensaries were deputed to visit outlying markets; and arrangements have recently been made for the deputation of Civil Hospital Assistants to travel systematically in the worst fever-stricken areas during the fever season and give medical aid on the spot. The increase in the number of dispensaries, and in the attendance at them, during the quinquennium is shown in the marginal table.

Year.	Number of dispensaries.	Number of patients.
1904 ...	544	3,331,832
1907 ...	587	4,076,825

The general effect of the measures taken may be gathered from the remarks recorded by the Inspector-General, Colonel R. Macrae, I.M.S., in the last Triennial (1905—1907) Report on the Hospitals and Dispensaries of Bengal: "Owing to the wise and unprecedented liberality of Government, the triennium under report has been one of exceptional progress in every direction. Throughout the Province many new hospitals have been completed or are under construction, or have been sanctioned; all have been greatly improved and well equipped; type-plans of operation-rooms and of outdoor departments of hospitals on modern lines have been issued, and many hospitals have already adopted them. In short, the medical institutions of the Province generally have been very largely brought up to date during the past three years. But there still remains much to be done before the medical needs of Bengal are adequately met."

Calcutta hospitals.

The Calcutta hospitals, again, have been altered almost beyond recognition, owing to a series of improvements, effected at great cost, which have brought these important institutions into line with modern requirements, and have also made them more attractive and popular. At the same time, owing to the zeal and energy of the officers concerned, the standard of efficiency has greatly improved. It would be beyond the scope of this report to give a detailed account of the improvements effected; but a brief mention may be made of some of the most important changes.

Sir Andrew Fraser devoted special attention to the Medical College Hospital; firstly, because it is a great hospital for Indians and therefore demands special attention from the

Government; and, secondly, because it is the great medical teaching institution of the Province and sends out its students to do medical work in all parts of Bengal as well as in other parts of India. This hospital was founded by means of public subscriptions and a sum of money raised by lottery for the improvement of Calcutta, the foundation-stone being laid by Lord Dalhousie, with masonic honours, in 1848. In the course of half a century its equipment had fallen behind modern requirements; but steps have now been taken to reorganize and bring it up to date. A large surgical hospital is being constructed, the foundation-stone being laid by Lord Minto in 1906, also with masonic honours; and Indian paying-patients' wards are in course of construction. New nurses' quarters have been built; the staff has been increased; new pathological and physiological laboratories have been completed and equipped. An isolation hospital and anatomical museum are also being built; and the construction of a fourth block is contemplated, thus completing the scheme of reorganization.

The changes made in the Campbell Medical School and Hospital have been scarcely less important. Three years ago the hospital was referred to officially as "that ancient and extraordinary edifice." It was stated that the necessity for its reconstruction had been recognized for many years past; "and with its completion one of the most glaring defects in the medical arrangements of Calcutta will disappear." The scheme is now approaching completion, the most important changes being the construction of a new single-storeyed ward for male patients, the remodelling of the central portion of the old main building, and the acquisition of a neighbouring insanitary *basti*. The additional space so obtained is to be utilized in building, among other structures, a hostel for 300 male students with teachers' quarters. Other improvements are also in progress in connection with the old main building, which was a great shed without proper ventilation and very unsuitable for a hospital ward, where hundreds of patients lay in view of each other in all stages of disease and suffering. Sir Andrew Fraser, after visiting the hospital, directed that this building should be demolished; that, in its place, two double-storeyed wards containing about 200 beds should be erected to the north and south; and that the central portion should be reconstructed and made an examination hall. The new central hall is complete, and the two double-storeyed wards are under construction, but will probably both be occupied by the beginning of the cold weather of 1908.

The Presidency General Hospital has also been greatly improved, the most important addition being the construction of a new paying-patients' block. A large tract of *basti* land to the east of the hospital has also been acquired by Government, the *basti* removed and the tanks filled up, thus greatly improving the sanitary condition of the surroundings of the hospital. The Howrah General Hospital is another ancient edifice that has been greatly improved lately, and further improvements are being carried out, by the construction of a ward, known as the Devi Prashad Ward, and of new nurses' quarters. The addition of an outdoor dispensary is also contemplated—a matter of especial importance, for the hospital serves a large local manufacturing area, and the railway terminus brings in large numbers of pilgrims and unemployed, often in an advanced state of disease. In the Sambhu Nath Pandit Hospital at Bhawanipur more nurses on better pay have been appointed, new quarters for them have been built, land for a new surgical ward has been purchased, and the staff has been increased. The North Suburban Hospital at Cossipore has also been greatly improved; and a grant has been given towards the construction of a suitable building for a branch institution of the Mayo Hospital known as the Chandney Hospital.

The improvements above mentioned have entailed heavy expenditure on the part of Government, as will be apparent from the marginal table showing the grants made by it during the last four years. The income of the hospitals has also been increased by a donation of one lakh received through H. R. H. the Prince of Wales and of Rs. 1,40,000 from the Lady Minto Fete Fund; but Government contributions represent nearly three-fourths of their total income.

	Rs.
1904	9,89,825
1905	8,42,294
1906	9,31,743
1907	13,12,957

One interesting innovation has been the institution of wards for paying patients. The first of such wards was started in the Presidency General Hospital for European patients. This was a matter in which His Honour's predecessor, Sir John Woodburn, was very deeply interested; and with substantial financial assistance from the European community the project was carried out during Sir Andrew's administration. Subsequently, in 1905, it was suggested that a similar paying ward should be attached to one of the Calcutta hospitals for the reception of Indian patients. His Honour received the suggestion sympathetically, for he knew, from enquiries which he had already made, the difficulties of many patients coming in from the country for treatment in Calcutta.

They are compelled to incur heavy expenditure for house accommodation, as well as for professional fees. They are also exposed to very undesirable conditions in respect of their surroundings while under treatment; for they have to engage a house or room, usually at short notice, at a high rent and frequently in an unsuitable neighbourhood. He promptly appointed a Committee of European doctors and representative Indian gentlemen to consider the whole question, and himself presided over one of their meetings. A workable scheme was devised; land was acquired; and, through the liberality of some Indian gentlemen, paying wards for Indian patients are being constructed at the Medical College Hospital.

Lastly may be mentioned the important question of nursing in which Sir Andrew took a deep personal interest. Impressed with the need of an increased nursing staff, he increased the Government grant to the Calcutta Hospital Nurses' Institution to Rs. 50,000, subject to the pre-existing condition that Government pays Rs. 3 for every rupee subscribed. Further measures are in contemplation for improving the efficiency of the nursing system.

Administrative changes.

A number of administrative changes in the Medical Department have taken place during the quinquennium. In 1905 a scheme was sanctioned for improving the position of officers of the Indian Medical Service by raising the pay of different ranks according to length of service. This reform, which was strongly supported by His Honour, has made the Indian Medical Service more popular and is much appreciated by its officers. The pay and prospects of compounders in dispensaries under Government supervision have also been improved; and proposals for improving the pay and prospects of the Subordinate Medical Service, in which for years past there has been much discontent, are under consideration. Several new posts have also been created, *e.g.*, in the Calcutta Medical College a separate Professor of Physiology, an Assistant Professor of Pathology, and a Demonstrator of Chemistry have been appointed, while the creation of separate chairs of Professors of Anatomy and Biology is proposed. Another important new appointment is that of a separate Police Surgeon for Calcutta. Until 1906 the post of the Police Surgeon, Coroner's Surgeon, and Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in the Medical College was combined with that of Superintendent of the Campbell Medical School and Hospital—an unsatisfactory arrangement, because it was impossible for one man to combine all his duties without detriment to the work of one

or the other. Sir Andrew Fraser accordingly proposed and obtained sanction to the separation of the appointments. There is now a whole-time Police Surgeon for Calcutta, which is a much better arrangement in the interests both of police work and of the students of the Campbell Medical School, to whom the Superintendent can now devote more time and attention, as well as to the hospital attached to the school.

Medical Schools

There has been a great advance in the efficiency of the Medical Schools in Bengal during the quinquennium, a number of improvements having been effected in accommodation, teaching and equipment; in raising the standard of preliminary education required from candidates for admission, and in the very important matter of modernizing the hospitals attached to the schools, so as to render them more suitable for clinical teaching as well as for the treatment of the sick. Personally, Sir Andrew Fraser has taken special interest in the moral and physical well-being of the medical students; and he has inaugurated measures to have them suitably housed and protected, as far as possible, from evil surroundings. In the Campbell Medical School, which is the chief medical school in Bengal, sites for a large hostel and play-ground have been acquired. For the Cuttack Medical School a hostel with a gymnasium and teachers' quarters is to be built; and at Patna new barracks and a gymnasium have been constructed for the students of the Temple Medical School. Special arrangements have also been made for the training of hill boys to enable them to work among their own people in the hills. They now receive such a training at the Patna Medical School in the winter and at Kalimpong in the hot weather. Sir Andrew has taken special interest in this scheme, and the results so far have been very encouraging.

Lunatic asylums.

When Sir Andrew Fraser became Lieutenant-Governor, there were 5 lunatic asylums in Bengal as now constituted, viz., the European and Native Asylums in Calcutta—the former at Bhawanipur, while the latter was called the Dullunda Asylum—and the asylums at Berhampore, Cuttack and Patna. The three last named were in charge of the district Civil Surgeons, while a resident surgeon of the Presidency General Hospital was Superintendent of the Calcutta European and Native Asylums. A Central Asylum was also under construction. In the five years of His Honour's administration the radical changes, suggested by him when a member of the Hemp Drugs Commission in 1893-94 and accepted by the Government of India, have been made. The Cuttack and Dullunda Asylums have been

closed, and their inmates transferred to the asylum at Berhampore. A separate Medical Officer, Major C. J. Robertson Milne, I.M.S., has been appointed Superintendent of the Berhampore Asylum, which is temporarily the Central Lunatic Asylum. And the whole system of treatment of lunatics has been changed, the conditions of asylum life being improved, and the warder staff made to realize their responsibilities towards the insane—a most important element in asylum administration.

Previously, lunatics were treated more as criminals than as unfortunates; the asylum was a jail rather than a hospital for the mentally diseased. It has now been recognized that the influence of suggestion is one of the most powerful agents in mental cases, and that the "non-restraint" system of English asylums should be adopted. These principles are to be given effect in a large Central Asylum for Indians, which is to be erected at Ranchi. This asylum, for which land has already been acquired, will be under the management and supervision of an expert alienist. It has been planned on the Villa Colony system, which His Honour had seen so successful at home, and will be far in advance of any similar institution in Asia. It has also been arranged to establish a lunatic asylum for Europeans and Eurasians at the same place, and managed on the same lines, for the lunatics of Northern India.

Leper asylums.

Most of the leper asylums in Bengal are maintained by the Mission to Lepers in India and the East. That Mission maintains asylums at Lohardaga, Purulia, Ranchi, Raniganj, Asansol, Muzaffarpur, Bhagalpur and Bankura; there is another asylum at Deoghar maintained from private charity and managed by a local committee; and only one asylum is maintained by Government, viz., the Albert Victor Asylum at Gobra (Calcutta). Sir Andrew Fraser gave liberal assistance to the Mission both by means of building grants and, in the case of three asylums, by annual capitation grants; for his view was that, by assisting the Mission asylums, Government would be able to accomplish much more than it could by establishing asylums of its own.

SANITATION.

The views of Sir Andrew Fraser on sanitation were expressed by him as follows in the Legislative Council in 1907: "What we want in this matter, more than anything

else, is the dissemination of correct views in regard to sanitation among the people. However anxious Government may be to secure sanitary improvement, its efforts must be futile without the co-operation of the great mass of the people. Government can direct and advise. It can undertake a few large schemes. It can give contributions to District Boards, Municipalities and other local bodies, to assist them in carrying out schemes of their own. But for real and effective progress throughout the Province reliance must be placed mainly on the people themselves. Government cannot possibly take in hand schemes for cleansing and freeing from jungle every village of the Province, or for filling up or otherwise dealing with all the little breeding places for mosquitoes, which exist without number in certain districts. Government may be able to conduct here and there experiments on approved lines as an inducement to the people to take the matter up for themselves; but after all, it is to the people that we must look for carrying out detailed sanitary works."

Unfortunately in Bengal it is difficult to realize this ideal. While there is a high standard of personal cleanliness, the people are indifferent to the cleanliness of their surroundings. They cling to the insanitary ways of their forefathers, and the labourers in the cause of sanitary science are few. The officers of Government have, consequently, to struggle against the *vis inertiæ* of a people who neither know nor care for the lessons of communal hygiene, with but little assistance or co-operation from the people themselves. Among the educated classes, there are not a few ready enough for other and less salutary propaganda, but the number of those willing to practise and preach the doctrine of cleanliness, light and air is small. In spite, however, of these drawbacks, fair sanitary progress has been made during the quinquennium.

The development of sanitary schemes has been facilitated by the administrative changes effected within the first year of Sir Andrew's administration. In December 1903 His Honour expressed his strong approval of a proposal to create a separate Sanitary Department for the whole of India; and in 1904 the first step in that direction was taken by the appointment of a Sanitary Commissioner with the Government of India distinct from, and independent of, the Director-General, Indian Medical Service. The separation of the Sanitary Department in this Province from the Medical Department was a natural

corollary of that measure. Sir Andrew Fraser therefore proposed that the Sanitary Commissioner should be given an independent position with a separate office establishment, and that he should cease to be subordinate to the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, as he had been since 1898. This proposal was sanctioned in 1905. Since that time, the Sanitary Commissioner has been directly subordinate to Government, and solely responsible for the efficient management of his Department, as the expert sanitary adviser of Government, and also of local bodies, such as Municipalities and District Boards, in regard to water-supply and conservancy arrangements. In regard to the latter matter, much useful work has been done; and apart from that, several important sanitary enquiries, surveys and schemes have been undertaken with the expert advice and assistance of the Sanitary Commissioner and Sanitary Engineer. It would be beyond the scope of this report to give an account of all the improvements effected or in progress. Details of these improvements will be found in the annual departmental reports; and all that can be attempted here is to give a brief sketch of the more important measures and enquiries connected with sanitation.

Water-supply.

One of the most important of these was the improvement of the sources of village water-supply. This question was no new one. The difficulties connected with an adequate supply of wholesome drinking water in rural areas had engaged the attention of successive Lieutenant-Governors for many years past. Enquiries had been made and voluminous correspondence had passed, but it was apparent that it was the quality rather than the quantity of water that was in fault. In Bengal the construction of tanks and wells has for many centuries been regarded as a becoming act of piety; but their maintenance and proper preservation are apt to be neglected. Not only so, but the people are habitually careless as to the necessity for keeping their tanks and wells free from pollution. In these circumstances, Sir Andrew Fraser, after satisfying himself, by means of enquiries in every district, that a deficiency of the quantity of water available for drinking purposes in villages is altogether exceptional, decided that the efforts of Government should be directed chiefly to improving the sources of supply and removing the causes of contamination. A promise was therefore given that, if in any case the local authorities would contribute one-third of the cost of effecting such improvements, and the public another third, Government would contribute the remaining third up to a

limit of Rs. 5,000 for any one district, and of Rs. 50,000 for the whole Province. These conditions were imposed in order that the gifts of Government might take a form which would encourage the villagers to help themselves, and foster a spirit of co-operation between the Government and the people. The offer was taken advantage of, Government contributing Rs. 42,000 in 1904-05 and smaller sums in subsequent years.

Plague measures.

The same considerations governed Sir. Andrew Fraser's policy in the campaign against plague. This policy briefly was that the Government must act with and through the people it endeavoured to save. For this purpose, in spite of the difficulty of dealing with their apathy, it was necessary to try to make the people realize the principles of prevention, viz., that admission of light and air into their houses will drive away rats and plague; that, when rats begin to die in or near their houses, they must evacuate them; that they must build their new houses so as to admit plenty of light and air; that they must not be too crowded; that destruction of rats is a positive duty, for every infected rat destroyed means the removal of a source of infection; and that the chances of attack after inoculation are very greatly minimized. These principles had been enumerated over and over again; but there was a tendency for the suggestions made to become gradually forgotten or overlooked.

In order to revive practical interest, His Honour convened and presided over an important Conference at Bankipore in 1907. There were present at that Conference the Sanitary Officers of Government, the Commissioner of the Division, all the Magistrates and Civil Surgeons of the Bihar districts, and a number of non-official gentlemen, both medical men and laymen, all deeply interested in the subject. There was a valuable discussion of the whole matter, and some useful notes were circulated afterwards. The relative importance of inoculation, evacuation of houses, rat-killing and the like were all discussed, as well as the times and places at which these measures would best be adopted, and the best method of medical relief. Letters from His Majesty the King-Emperor and the Viceroy were translated into the vernacular and widely circulated for the encouragement of the people. The instructions of the Government of India regarding the prevention of the spread of plague, and a leaflet prepared by the Sanitary Commissioner, Bengal, containing instructions for its prevention and treatment, were circulated to all Commissioners. An officer

of wide sanitary experience was specially deputed to the plague-infected districts in Bihar, to give instructions to selected medical officers, of the Assistant Surgeon and Hospital Assistant classes, in the most approved methods of inoculation, and to explain to the people the prophylactic benefit of this treatment. At the same time, District Officers and Civil Surgeons convened meetings of the people, and explained to them the measures advised by Government. Three officers of the Indian Medical Service, 7 Civil Assistant Surgeons and 18 Civil Hospital Assistants were also specially deputed to Bihar for plague work; and, in addition to the cost of their salaries, grants amounting to over Rs. 70,000 were made for helping the people to resist the epidemic. Every effort was made to secure the co-operation of the people, meetings being held at which the programme and scope of work were fully explained, and considerable success was attained.

Prevention malaria.

The quinquennium also witnessed a strenuous endeavour to advance the campaign against malaria. The first step taken was to cheapen the price of quinine, packets containing 7 grains being sold for one pice instead of 5 grains as formerly. The reduction of price took effect in 1904, and in the same year further measures were taken to ensure a wider distribution of the drug. It had hitherto been distributed by means of post offices and local dispensaries, but this system failed to afford full facilities for its purchase. It was therefore decided to employ the agency of village school-masters for its sale, and to open new distributing centres, so that no area in the Province should be more than 5 miles from a place where a supply of good and cheap quinine could be obtained. At the same time, drainage schemes in fever-ridden areas were pushed on, the most important being the Magra Hat drainage scheme. This is a work of great magnitude, for it involves the drainage of a swampy area of about 290 square miles in the 24-Parganas, and the estimated total cost is 17 lakhs. More recently (*i.e.*, since 1906), anti-malarial operations have been begun in certain selected towns as an object-lesson to other Municipalities.

Perhaps the most important of all the measures taken in recent years to combat malaria has been the appointment of a Drainage Committee. It had been suggested that a Commission or Committee should be appointed to enquire into the cause of the malarial fevers prevalent in Bengal and their remedies. Sir Andrew had the question considered by the Commissioners' Conference and subsequently by a

small special committee. He came to the conclusion that little advantage would be gained from the appointment of a Commission with a mandate of so general a character, and that a general enquiry regarding remedial measures would tend to be infructuous. But His Honour felt that much good might be done by a Committee investigating a narrower field. It was well known that in Bengal, and especially in the Presidency Division, one of the factors in the causation of malarial disease is the obstruction of drainage due to the gradual rise of the delta, owing to which the rivers have in many cases abandoned their beds and sought new courses elsewhere. This seemed to His Honour the area in which an enquiry was most likely to have good results, in order that a list of practicable drainage schemes might be drawn up and a definite programme adopted.

Accordingly, in 1906, he appointed a Committee of experts, which held an exhaustive enquiry and submitted a valuable report. Briefly, they found that the main causes of malaria were the insanitary state of the village sites and the water-logged condition of the country. They considered that further enquiry of a systematic and organized character should be made regarding local medical conditions and the existing obstructions to drainage, in order to determine the exact prevalence of malaria, the causes to which it is attributable, and the measures necessary for its prevention. They therefore proposed the creation of a special Engineering Division consisting of an Executive Engineer and subordinates, who should be charged with the examination of the drainage conditions of specified areas and with the preparation of projects for the improvement of drainage where necessary. In dealing with the medical aspect of the question, they recommended systematic and continuous enquiry into the causes of malaria during each fever season, and proposed that selected Hospital Assistants should be deputed to travel systematically in the most affected areas during the fever season to distribute medical aid. At the same time, they pointed out, as has often been pointed out in the past, that the sanitary improvement of the village sites can only be carried out by the people themselves: that until the villagers are educated up to a point at which they understand the benefits of ordinary common-sense sanitary precautions, little progress can be hoped for.

Sir Andrew Fraser accepted the recommendations of the Committee, and measures have been taken to give effect to them. Some, indeed, had already been anticipated. For instance, the main remedy suggested by the Committee for

improving the condition of village sites was the creation of local bodies having the necessary powers to enforce local sanitation; but provision had already been made in the Bill to amend the Local Self-Government Act (since passed into law) for the creation of such local sanitary authorities. It was also suggested that Government should, as an object-lesson, take action in a selected area. But, as stated above, this is already being done, and experiments have for some time past been carried on in several places for the destruction of mosquitoes. As regards other recommendations, it will suffice to say that action has already been taken to carry out most of them. The Government of India have sanctioned the deputation of a special Indian Medical Service officer for the purpose of conducting a systematic and continuous enquiry into the causes of malaria and the extent to which it prevails; while the question of creating a special Engineering Division for the examination of the drainage conditions of specified areas is under the consideration of that Government. His Honour also sanctioned a scheme for the deputation of a large number of selected Civil Hospital Assistants during the fever season to distribute medical aid in specially malarious tracts. A leaflet containing instructions for self-treatment with quinine, and stating where pice packets can be obtained, has recently been widely distributed in English and in the vernaculars. And further efforts are to be made to popularize, as widely as possible, the use of quinine as a febrifuge amongst the mass of the people.

Another enquiry of considerable importance instituted by Sir Andrew was in connection with the system of septic tanks. Shortly after his assumption of office his attention was drawn to the question of the efficiency of the system of septic tanks, a number of which had in recent years been built along the banks of the Hooghly. Complaints were made that, in some of these installations, the method of disposing of the effluent was of an objectionable character; and Bengali Hindu residents along the banks of the Hooghly represented that the water of that sacred river was being polluted. In brief, it was stated not only that religious susceptibilities were touched, but also that the discharge from the tanks constituted a public nuisance and a sanitary danger. Sir Andrew Fraser found that the objections which had been raised were, to some extent, well-founded, and decided that an enquiry was necessary in order to ascertain whether, and if so under what conditions, the discharge of the effluent into the Hooghly might be permitted. His Honour accordingly appointed, in April 1904, a Committee to examine

Septic tanks.

the working of the septic tank system in Bengal, to investigate the different methods by which the effluent could be disposed of, to report on the various questions raised, and generally to advise what changes should be made in the existing installations and in their methods of working, so that the best results might be obtained.

The Committee held an exhaustive enquiry and arrived at some important conclusions. As regards the pollution of the Hooghly, it was found that there was a difference of opinion among representatives of the Bengali Hindu community. The real objection to the discharge of the effluent into it appeared to be sentimental, rather than religious, and to be largely due to ignorance of the transformation effected in the nature of the sewage by its passage through the septic tanks. The Committee concluded therefore that the opposition would probably subside if the real facts were brought home to the public, so that the great utility of the new system might be recognized. They were unable, however, to submit a final opinion on the question whether the effluent might be so purified, both chemically and bacteriologically, that its discharge into the river Hooghly at any point might be safely permitted, and recommended that further observations and experiments should be made before a final decision was arrived at. These were satisfactorily carried out, and it was apparent that if the installations were constructed and worked in accordance with certain definite principles, and the effluent suitably treated, the resulting discharge would be free from objection both from a chemical and from a bacteriological point of view. The Lieutenant-Governor accepted the conclusion that if these conditions were complied with, there would no longer be any sanitary ground for opposing the construction of new installations, or the continuance of those already built on suitable lines. After further experiments instructions were issued regarding the methods to be adopted to ensure a proper sterilization of the effluent from septic tanks; and rules were laid down, under the Factories Act, to regulate such installations and to prevent pollution, by ensuring that the effluent is sterilized before being discharged into the Hooghly. It may be added that Dr. Fowler, a sanitary expert, was brought out from England in connection with this large question.

This enquiry was of importance because the interests involved were great, viz., those of the public, which was vitally interested in the possibility of the pollution of the Hooghly; those of the mill-owners, who had sunk large sums of money in these installations; and, not least, those of the

municipalities of Bengal, for it was felt that if the system could be made efficient and unobjectionable, it would do much to remove one of the greatest difficulties of municipal administration. The enquiry had also a good effect in indicating a readiness on the part of the Bengal Government to study popular opinion and to take the public into confidence.

Railway Bazars.

Another matter of considerable importance from a sanitary point of view which was taken up by Sir Andrew was the question of regulating, from the beginning, the bazars or townlets which are rapidly springing into existence in connection with railway stations. In recent years there has been a rapid extension of railway enterprise, which has resulted in the construction of new lines of railway and in the opening, both on these and upon the older lines, of new railway stations. In many cases bazars have grown up in the neighbourhood of the stations by gradual accretion in a haphazard manner, and without regard to the primary principles of sanitation. In some cases, it is true, proper provision for their sanitation has been made by the railway authorities; but in others the result has been the creation of overcrowded *bastis*, whose insanitary condition endangers the health both of the people who live in them and of the railway employés who reside in the vicinity. Several such cases came to the notice of His Honour, who observed that the principal difficulties would never have arisen, if at the outset care had been taken to make a proper alignment of streets and roads. He therefore issued orders directing that special attention should be paid to this matter, that an examination should be made of the railway stations in each Division, that a suitable alignment of streets and roads should be made, and that the bazars should be inspected periodically in order to make sure that the alignments are adhered to. Further provisions to ensure the proper sanitation of such places have been inserted in the Act amending the Local Self-Government Act recently passed by Council, of which an account will be found in the section dealing with Local Self-Government.

Vaccination.

Several useful reforms have also been introduced into the Vaccination Department, which have tended to better work and greater efficiency. The pay of the subordinate inspecting staff has been increased; arrangements have been made to give the inspecting and vaccinating staff instruction in the most approved modern methods of vaccination at selected centres; and the system of granting rewards to vaccinators has been generally introduced. Antiseptic vaccination

has been employed throughout the Province; and the change has been attended with satisfactory results.

Cinchona Department.

Of recent years the consumption of quinine has grown very rapidly, owing both to the cheapening of its price and to the measures adopted by His Honour to ensure a wider distribution of the drug. The consequent growth in consumption necessitated some important changes in the Cinchona Department, in order to keep pace with the increasing demand on the factory, to carry out the more careful cultivation required to meet that demand, and to secure a better return. The systematic analysis of bark discontinued in 1879 has, accordingly, been resumed, the factory constituted a separate charge from the plantation, the buildings enlarged, and the staff reorganized. A comprehensive scheme for the expansion and fuller development of the cinchona plantations has also been prepared.

EXCISE.

At the first meeting of the Bengal Legislative Council at which Sir Andrew Fraser presided (in December 1903), a Bill to consolidate and amend the excise law of Bengal was introduced. After the Select Committee had reported on the Bill, an important debate was held, at which the then Advocate-General, the Hon'ble Mr. J. T. Woodroffe, urged *inter alia* that a strict limitation should be imposed on the number of places at which liquors or drugs can be purchased; that efforts should be made to ascertain the existence of local opinion and local public sentiment, and a reasonable amount of deference should be paid to such opinion when ascertained; and also that, where municipalities exist, Municipal Commissioners should be consulted in determining the location of shops. He further moved that the Bill should be so amended as to provide that intoxicating liquors and drugs should not be sold, at any house licensed for the sale of such liquors and drugs, to women or to children under the age of 14; and that reasonably adequate provision should be made therein so as to prevent, as far as possible, the spread of drunkenness in Bengal. Recognizing the importance of the principles involved, and desirous that no hasty decision should be come to on so far-reaching a measure, His Honour accepted the motion, and the questions raised were referred back to the Select Committee. Shortly afterwards, the Government of India issued a circular letter laying down the general principles on which the action of Government in respect to

the consumption of liquor should be based. They disclaimed any desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation as being outside the duty of the Government. They announced that it was their settled policy to minimize temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do; and that all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated to the furtherance of that policy. The most effective method of furthering it would be, they held, to make the tax upon liquor as high as it is possible to raise it without stimulating illicit production to a degree which would increase instead of diminishing the total consumption, and without driving people to substitute deleterious drugs for alcohol or a more or less harmful form of liquor. Subject to the same considerations, the number of liquor shops should be restricted as far as possible and their location should be periodically subject to strict examination in order to minimize the temptation to drink and to conform as far as is reasonable to public opinion. These principles had the full support and concurrence of His Honour.

The introduction of new provisions into the Excise Bill required further reference to District Officers and to the Government of India; and in the meantime that Government appointed the Indian Excise Committee to consider the progress of excise administration in each Province in respect of intoxicating liquors, to consider how far it was calculated to give the fullest practical effect to the general policy laid down, and to devise any reforms that might be necessary. This Committee visited the Province during the year 1905-06, and held sittings in Calcutta, Bankipore, Darjeeling, Cuttack and Burdwan, visited the local distilleries, recorded evidence, and conferred with the local Government on excise matters. They submitted their report to the Government of India in July 1906; and during the next 12 months the Government of India dealt with their recommendations in a series of Resolutions. Some of the principal recommendations of the Indian Excise Committee, affecting this Province, which have been approved by the Government of India, are as follows:— (1) gradual restriction of the privileges relating to *pachwai* allowed in Bengal to aboriginal tribes and better regulations for its manufacture and sale; (2) restriction of the outstill system to exceptional areas; (3) gradual introduction of the contract distillery system; (4) enhancement of rates of duty on country liquor; (5) revision of the limits of retail sale and possession of country spirit; (6) better control of the trade in imported spirit; (7) recasting of the excise law

and rules; (8) reorganization and strengthening of excise establishments. Action has been and is being taken on these recommendations. The amendment of the excise law for the Province, which was held in abeyance until receipt of the orders of the Government of India on the Indian Excise Committee's Report, has now been again taken in hand; and a revised Bill has been prepared and is under discussion with the Government of India.

The introduction of the contract distillery system has been the most important reform in excise work carried out during His Honour's administration, and it may be noticed at some length. The question of reforming the existing systems of manufacture and supply of country spirit in Bengal had long engaged the attention of the authorities in the Province; and early in the year 1904 Mr. K. Badshah, then Commissioner of Excise, was deputed to Madras and Bombay to enquire into, and report upon, the methods of manufacture and taxation of country spirit in those Provinces. Mr. Badshah's report was discussed by the Members of the Board of Revenue with the Divisional Commissioners, and the proposals formulated were accepted by the Lieutenant-Governor. It was decided that reform of the existing system of manufacture and supply was urgently necessary; that strenuous efforts should be made to improve the quality of country spirit; that the outstill system should be gradually withdrawn except from isolated tracts; that small extensions of the central distillery areas should be made from April 1905; that the contract distillery system should, as a preliminary measure, be introduced into the Orissa Division and Midnapore, and be extended to other Divisions year after year; and that the preventive establishment should be strengthened.

The main features of the contract system, it may be explained, are separation of the rights of manufacture and vend, fixation of a wholesale rate and maximum retail prices, and retail of liquor at fixed strengths only. None of these conditions were existent in Bengal or could be secured under the outstill system and the central distillery system. It has been held that only under the contract system, and after the establishment of modern scientific distilleries, will it be possible to provide liquor of good quality in remote localities at reasonable prices—a condition precedent to the complete abolition of outstills; and that only under this system will it be possible to ascertain the actual consumption of country spirit in the Province, and to secure that further necessary reforms shall not be hampered, as hitherto, by want of knowledge. Further, it was shown by Mr. Badshah that,

under the contract distillery system in the Presidency districts, the high prices of country spirit infringed the canon laid down by the Government of India that the taxation of country spirit should approximate to the tariff rate of duty for imported spirit; that in consequence drinkers were having recourse to cheap foreign liquor; and that this result was inevitable under a system in which the wholesale dealers, and, in their turn, the retail dealers, charged whatever prices they pleased. It was one of the aims of the introduction of the contract distillery system to make it possible for country liquor to be sold at known strengths, and at maximum prices which would compare favourably with the prices of imported liquor.

This system was first introduced into the districts of Midnapore, Cuttack, Balasore and Puri in the year 1905-06; in the following year it was extended to the districts of Darjeeling, Murshidabad, Jessore and Khulna; during the year 1907-08 the system was further extended to the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura, Hooghly, Howrah, Nadia and Manbhum, to the Barasat, Basirhat, Barrackpore and Diamond Harbour subdivisions of the district of the 24-Parganas, to the Deoghar, Jamtara, Rajmahal and Pakaur subdivisions of the district of the Sonthal Parganas, and to the distillery area of the Giridih subdivision in the district of Hazaribagh. In other words, the system has already been introduced into 18 districts or parts of districts; and it is proposed further to extend the system from 1909-10 to the districts of Monghyr, Bhagalpur and Purnea. At present, the contract liquor is, for the most part, supplied from outside the Province; but two well-equipped distilleries employing European methods have been established in Bengal and have been at work since 1907-08, and another is being constructed in Bihar and will work from 1909-10. These three distilleries are all owned by European firms; for though continuous efforts have been made by the Commissioner of Excise to attract Indian enterprise and capital to this business, those efforts have up till now met with but indifferent success. The only noticeable case of Indian enterprise in this direction has been at Ranchi, where, on the introduction of the distillery system into a part of the district, a local distiller was induced to set up stills worked according to European methods. Indian distillers of means have, however, been given leases of the Bihar distilleries with monopolies of supply in distillery areas; and the distillers working at the Government distillery at Russa, who supply Calcutta with country spirit, have been reduced in

number in order that they may improve their methods of fermentation and manufacture.

This policy has given to Government a more definite control over the consumption of liquor. While it has cheapened the cost of liquor for the retail vendors throughout the districts mentioned above, it has enabled Government to enhance the rates of duty; and in future the effects of taxation upon the consumption of liquor will be judged with greater precision. Incidentally, the result of its introduction and of abolishing a large number of outstills in Sambalpur has been to reduce the total number of outstills in the Province from 2,141 in 1903-04 to 1,659 in 1907-08. The whole number of country spirit shops has been reduced from 3,214 to 3,039 in the same period, and further reductions are being made. Much has also been done to remove outstills from objectionable sites. It may be added that the rate of duty on country spirit has been raised during the quinquennium in 19 districts, and further increases are being considered; the limits of retail sale have been reduced in 18 districts; issue strengths have been reduced in number throughout the distillery areas; and in some districts the strength of liquor has been diminished and preferential rates of duty in favour of the weaker strengths have been sanctioned.

At the same time, the policy of reducing temptations to Indians to drink foreign spirit has been steadily kept in view. In the mofussil districts the country spirit and foreign spirit businesses are now entirely separate; and the sale of foreign liquor is allowed only where there is a considerable number of persons accustomed to take such liquor. The duty on imported liquors and on country rum was also raised from Rs. 6 to Rs. 7 per proof gallon in 1906 and 1907, respectively, and the duty on beer from one anna to two annas a gallon in 1908. As regards Calcutta, where the communities are much intermixed, a special Committee, which was appointed at the end of 1907 to advise on the measures to be taken with regard to the liquor traffic of that city, has recently found that it is not possible to separate the vend of country spirit and foreign spirit without an undesirable increase in the total number of liquor shops; but a considerable number of foreign spirit licenses have been cancelled, and further action in this direction is under consideration. In accordance with the recommendations of the Committee on other points, the number of liquor shops has already been diminished, the limit of possession and retail sale of country spirit and the

issue strength of such spirit have been reduced, late-closing will be further regulated, and other reforms will be considered.

Among other changes effected during the last five years may be mentioned the enhancement of the treasury price of opium in Orissa, which was sanctioned with the object of checking the increase of consumption, the fixation of a uniform rate of duty on *ganja*, and the imposition of restrictions on the possession and sale of morphia and novocain and of further restrictions on the possession and sale of cocaine. Some strengthening of the excise establishment of the Province for the better performance of their duties of inspection, prevention and detection has been effected, but a matured scheme of reorganization has yet to be prepared and approved. The excise revenue has risen during the five years from 137 lakhs to 170 lakhs. Of this increase nearly 23 lakhs has been derived from country spirits, 5 lakhs from opium, and 3½ lakhs from hemp drugs. There has no doubt been some increase of consumption of liquor due to the increase of the working population and the higher wages drawn in the collieries, in the factories and in Calcutta; but the increase of revenue is largely due to the substitution of licit for illicit liquor, to the imposition of higher duty and license fees, and to more efficient administration.

OPIUM.

As a result of the negotiations between British and Chinese Governments, and of a Resolution passed in the House of Commons on the 30th May 1906, it was decided in that year by the Secretary of State that the number of chests of opium offered for sale in Calcutta for export should be restricted and the area under poppy cultivation in the Bihar and Benares Agencies reduced. Effect was given to these orders in the season of 1906-07, when the area under opium cultivation was limited to 928,638 *bighas*, as against the limit of 1,022,000 *bighas* previously prescribed; in 1907-08 it was further reduced to 809,530 *bighas*; and it has been decided that for 1908-09 the area should not exceed 800,000 *bighas*. These reductions were made for the most part in Bihar, where opium cultivation has now been reduced to 200,000 *bighas*, and were effected by abandoning less profitable cultivation in outlying districts

and by concentrating the remaining cultivation in more compact areas.

In 1904, on the recommendation of the Lieutenant-Governor some important changes were made in the conditions of service of officers of the Opium Department. These changes were due to the necessity of remedying the grievances of a Department known to be underpaid and generally discontented. Owing to a serious block of promotion, senior officers, whose salaries had been barely sufficient for their expenses during a long period of service, found their emoluments stationary at the end of it, and that at a time when their needs were often greater. In order to improve their position, the scale of personal salaries up to Rs. 600 a month was revised, so as to accelerate promotion, and the system of personal salaries was extended up to the grade of Rs. 900. In the case of junior officers, it was decided to raise the pay of probationers to Rs. 200 a month until they passed their departmental examinations and thereafter to Rs. 250 a month, and to allow them, on being appointed to a substantive post, to count service for promotion from the date of passing the examinations. Supplementary orders have also been issued that when an Assistant Opium Agent, whose salary is less than Rs. 500 a month, is placed in charge of a division, he may be granted a charge allowance of an amount, not exceeding Rs. 100 a month, that will raise his salary to not more than Rs. 500 a month. These changes have done much to improve the pay and prospects of the Opium Department.

SALT DEPARTMENT.

The most important measure connected with the administration of the Salt Department during the Lieutenant-Governorship of Sir Andrew Fraser was the abolition of the salt *rawana* system. This system dates from a time when there was extensive manufacture of salt on behalf of Government. Until the year 1863, Government retained the monopoly of manufacture, but in 1864 this was abandoned, and the salt trade was left to private enterprise under a system of excise. The factories were scattered over a large area; and in order to guard against the threefold danger of illicit manufacture, smuggling from the factories, and smuggling of imported salt from sailing ships, a large preventive force was maintained. The *rawana* system formed a second line of defence. Under this system, the purchaser

of a consignment of salt above five seers, after payment of duty, was obliged to obtain a permit, or *rawana*, to convey the salt to its destination by a specified route; and while the purchaser was within certain defined limits, conterminous with the salt-producing districts, he had to tender his *rawana* for inspection at pass-stations. On the destination being finally reached, the preventive officer issued retail *rawanas* to cover the transport of any salt sold until the entire consignment was disposed of. Gradually, as the conditions of the salt supply and trade changed, the above arrangements were modified, the *rawana* system being abolished in Puri in 1877, and in the rest of Orissa in 1885. The salt limits were also gradually contracted elsewhere, till the protected area was confined to the sea-board of Lower Bengal, from Chittagong to Midnapore, excluding Calcutta; and the rules for the grant of *rawanas* were made less stringent.

It is possible that the *rawana* system may have helped at one time to check smuggling, which was chiefly confined to manufacturing areas; but the case is very different now that the licit manufacture of salt has been discontinued, and practically all the salt used in Bengal is imported in steamers, is shown in their manifests, and either pays duty at once or is passed into bond. Since the year 1874 the merits of the system have been constantly called in question, experienced officers holding that it was not worked effectively, that it afforded no protection to the salt revenue from illicit manufacture, and that the returns of consumption under it were untrustworthy, as the salt-traders could so manipulate statistics as to screen illicit manufacture and the trade in untaxed salt. Of recent years fresh evidence has been obtained of the inefficiency of *rawanas* for protective purposes. It was found that the system favoured smuggling and illicit manufacture, hampered trade, interfered with the distribution of salt, and restricted consumption by raising prices; for, every application for a *rawana* having to be presented on stamped paper of the value of Re. 1, and to be accompanied by a fee, the extra expense involved tended to raise the price of salt. In 1905, therefore, the Board of Revenue proposed the abolition of the system, and His Honour, accepting their recommendation, obtained the sanction of the Government of India to that measure.

The duty on salt was reduced in 1905 from Rs. 2 to Re. 1-8 per maund, and in 1907 there was a further reduction to Re. 1 per maund. These reductions have brought about a fall in retail prices and benefited all classes of the population.

EMIGRATION.

During the administration of Sir Andrew Fraser important reforms were introduced in the system of inland emigration. For many years past it had been a matter of common knowledge that that system was not successful. The tea gardens of Assam complained of shortness of labour; the relations between employer and employed were not satisfactory; in the recruiting districts of Bengal grave abuses were committed in obtaining emigrants. In order to devise some solution of the difficulties which had arisen, the Government of India in February 1906 appointed a representative Committee to examine exhaustively the whole question of labour supply to Assam. The Committee visited the more important recruiting districts in Bengal and other Provinces and the labour districts of Assam, and submitted a valuable report. Briefly, they attributed the shortness of labour in the tea gardens of Assam mainly to two causes—(1) the odium attaching in recruiting districts to emigration to Assam, and (2) the growing competition of other industries. They made a number of recommendations for the removal of the unpopularity clinging to emigration, and advocated various measures to enable planters to meet the competition of other industries requiring a large labour force. It is unnecessary here to give a detailed account of those recommendations, and it will be sufficient to say that, as a whole, they received the support of Sir Andrew Fraser.

The most important part of the Committee's report, as far as this Province is concerned, consisted of their recommendations for the removal of the unpopularity which clings to emigration to Assam. On this point, the opinion of His Honour was that the true solution of the problem lay in the encouragement of free labour. He pointed out that, though it may be long before the Assam tea planter can come into the labour market on the same footing as other employers, and obtain his labour without the present enormous initial cost, that is the goal to be aimed at; and the most promising way of reaching it is the elimination of the contractor and the encouragement of recruiting by garden sardars. While admitting that under present conditions it is not possible to get rid of contractors, he felt that they should be brought under closer control, and that only contractors licensed under the Act should be permitted to recruit emigrants for Assam. Sir Andrew, therefore, urged that the first step to be taken to render emigration less unpopular, and to prevent malpractices, was to abolish the system of unlicensed recruitment known as "free emigration."

Previous to the year 1901, it may be explained, grave abuses existed in connection with this system. When, therefore, Act VI of 1901 was passed, free emigration was prohibited from the Chota Nagpur Division and the district of the Sonthal Parganas, where, owing to the backward state of the population, abuses were most common. It was, however, considered inadvisable to prohibit free emigration from the rest of Bengal, for fear that *bona fide* voluntary emigration might be prevented altogether. Unlicensed recruiters soon found means of evading the law by smuggling in coolies from prohibited areas to the free depots. Not only was the law broken as regards the area in which recruitment takes place, but in many cases recourse was had to force, fraud and intimidation, in order to get coolies and to compel them to allow themselves to be registered as emigrants to Assam under false names, descriptions and addresses. Every effort was made to put a stop to these malpractices, though, owing to misdescription and falsification of books, it was next to impossible to trace a cooly when once he had been got inside the depot. Numerous prosecutions were instituted; but the proportion of convictions was necessarily small, because of the difficulties in the way of tracing emigrants, and, when they were traced, of preventing the corruption of witnesses; for the price paid for coolies is sufficiently high to compensate for a certain risk, even of imprisonment. The result was that, after months of patient enquiry, the accused might be acquitted; and even if he was convicted, he was only an irresponsible underling, the tool of a contractor with large resources who escaped detection.

Sir Andrew Fraser was convinced from the enquiries he had made that the so-called free depots were not only centres of abuses, which it was the duty of Government to suppress; but, since they helped to perpetuate the bad name which emigration to Assam has acquired, the worst enemies of the tea industry. They had the effect of stifling lawful and licensed recruitment, inasmuch as it was impossible for licensed contractors, hampered by the expense and supervision involved by licenses for themselves and their recruiters, to compete with the irresponsible and uncontrolled operations of the unlicensed recruiters of "free" contractors, by whom the best recruiting districts were overrun. Recruiting by sardars was also seriously affected by this system, for the high prices offered by the free contractors led to many coolies who were originally recruited by garden sardars finding their way to the depots. In these circumstances, His Honour strongly urged that immediate

measures of prevention should be taken, even before orders were passed on the Committee's report. This proposal was sanctioned by the Government of India; and from the 1st November 1907 free or unlicensed recruitment has been prohibited throughout the Province.

As another means of limiting the field of contractors, Sir Andrew advocated the adoption of special measures to encourage recruiting by means of garden sardars, *i.e.*, emigrants who have been to Assam and return to their country to enlist fresh emigrants. This policy had been recommended both by the Labour Enquiry Commission appointed in 1896 and the Labour Enquiry Committee of 1906; and the latter suggested that, as a means of bringing it into practical effect, certain districts should be closed altogether to licensed contractors and thrown open to sardars alone. Their proposal was accepted by the Government of India; and a notification was issued prohibiting recruitment except by garden sardars from any of the districts of the Bhagalpur and Patna Divisions. The Committee further recommended that, to encourage the sardari system of recruitment, the registration of intending emigrants before a Magistrate should be dispensed with in the case of emigrants recruited by garden sardars, provided that the emigrant was not put under contract, and that a system of control by local agents, without the intervention of the Magistrates, should be introduced. It was suggested at the same time that the concession should be confined to approved agencies and associations. The Lieutenant-Governor accepted this proposal and granted the concession to the Tea Districts Labour Supply Association, on condition that the local agents of that Association should be held responsible for the working of the garden sardars accredited to them. At first, it was proposed to make local agents absolutely responsible for the working of the garden sardars and to enforce that responsibility by rendering their licenses liable to cancellation for the malpractices of sardars. Subsequently, as the result of a representation made by the Secretaries to the Tea Districts Labour Supply Association, the matter was reconsidered; and as the conditions appeared to have been unduly strict, they were relaxed to the extent that the local agent has now to prevent, to the best of his ability, all misconduct on the part of the garden sardars accredited to him and to bring all illegal acts committed by them to the notice of the District Magistrate.

Another important matter dealt with was the recruitment of emigrants from districts adjoining Native States. The Chiefs of those States strongly object to emigration and do

their best to prevent it; but nevertheless, as their subordinates wink at it, there is a large and important business in Native State coolies. The absence of supervision over this form of recruitment has led to great abuses in the neighbouring districts in British territory, from which the most valuable aboriginal labour for the tea-gardens is obtained. The recruiter, as a rule, has his headquarters in British territory, and does not go into the Native States more than he can help. He is afraid to do so, for the Chief is opposed to him. It is easier, therefore, and in many ways safer, for him to recruit inhabitants of British districts and pass them off there as coolies from Native States. They are entered in no register; and once they have been sent up to Assam or to a free depot, it is practically impossible to trace them. The protection afforded by the Act is thus rendered nugatory. It has now been held that this practice is an evasion of the law, and that as the districts on the borders of the Native States have all been notified under section 3 of the Act as closed to recruitment except under it, emigration must be governed by its provisions. Contractors are, therefore, prohibited from assisting any one to emigrate therefrom, whether inhabitants of British territory or of Native States, except in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Orders have accordingly been issued that all such breaches of the law should be followed by prosecution.

NAVIGATION.

Of recent years increasing attention has been paid to the waterways of Bengal and, in particular, to the routes connecting Calcutta with Eastern Bengal and Assam. The chief of these routes is that provided by the Calcutta and Eastern Canals. These so-called canals are a system of navigable channels, chiefly natural but partly artificial, the natural portions of the route being the tidal channels and rivers of the Sundarbans, and the artificial portions being cuts connecting the tidal channels. They provide a continuous interior line of communication between Calcutta and Barisal, and it is along them that the rice, jute and oil-seeds of Eastern and Northern Bengal, the tea of Assam and Cachar, and the products of the Sundarbans pour into Calcutta. They constitute one of the most important systems of inland navigation in the world, for they extend over a length of 1,127 miles; the tonnage of cargo and passenger

boats plying along them averages a million tons per annum; and the value of the traffic is estimated at nearly four millions sterling. This system was devised and has steadily been developed for boat traffic.

There are not the same facilities of communication for the inland steamer traffic plying between Calcutta and the districts of Eastern Bengal and Assam, where there are hundreds of miles of fine waterways for the most part uninfluenced by the tides. The whole of the steamer traffic from these fertile districts has to find its way to Calcutta by a long circuitous route through the Sundarbans and round by Saugor Island. The idea of building a steamer canal between Calcutta and Eastern Bengal has been mooted several times in the last half century, and some 30 years ago the Bengal Government was prepared to construct a direct steamer canal between Calcutta and the eastern districts. The steamer companies, however, were not in favour of the scheme. At that time the water-borne traffic to Calcutta was seven times greater than that carried by the Eastern Bengal State Railway; and the steamer companies could dictate their own terms for the carriage of goods. They consequently preferred the long route through the Sundarbans, which was free from tolls, to a direct canal, for the use of which considerable tollage would have had to be paid.

With the development of railways in Bengal and Assam, the Agents of the inland steamer companies have realized that the long circuitous route through the Sundarbans is a great disadvantage; and the question of providing a short direct route has therefore been taken up. Two schemes have been put forward, viz., the improvement of the route through the Madaripur Bil and the canalization of Tolly's Nullah. The effect of these schemes would be to reduce the distance to Calcutta from Goalundo and Narayanganj by 260 and 186 miles respectively. A further advantage to trade would be that instead of passing through an uninhabited region, which gains nothing from them, the steamers would traverse cultivated tracts, which would take advantage of their opportunities, and increase the volume of imports and exports.

The Madaripur Bil is a large depression in the Faridpur district, between the Kumar and Madhumati rivers, which is practically dry for a large portion of the year, but in the rains forms a direct means of communication between Madaripur and other jute centres and the terminus of the Eastern Bengal State Railway at Khulna. The improvement of this route was taken in hand under the orders of Sir John

Woodburn, and estimates aggregating over 5 lakhs of rupees were sanctioned. The scheme has since gradually expanded. During the administration of Sir James Bourdillon sanction was given to another estimate of 4½ lakhs (raised later to 5¼ lakhs) for further improvements to the channel. With this outlay the channel was made efficient during the rains, and it has consequently been used largely at that season by steamers and flats. The question of widening and deepening the channel, so as to provide a safe and direct route for steamers and flats all through the year, was next taken up. The scheme, which involves a further outlay of over 17 lakhs, has received the sanction of the Secretary of State. It has been arranged with the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam that half the further capital cost will be met by each Province, the net revenue being shared between them in proportion to the capital outlay. The Bengal Government will, for the present, retain control of the channel, the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam being consulted with regard to its management and development. Work is about to be commenced with a large suction dredger recently purchased by the Government of Bengal.

The second scheme known as the canalization of Tolly's Nullah is a corollary of the first. This scheme is proposed in order to bring the river steamers which run to Eastern Bengal and Assam into closer and more direct touch with the trade centres of Calcutta. Up to Samukpota, at the junction of Tolly's Nullah with the Bidyadhari river, there exists for about three months in the year fairly direct and efficient water communication with Eastern Bengal and Assam, but at that place river steamers are blocked from access to Calcutta. They cannot pass through the Dhappa lock into the Calcutta canals, and they are similarly debarred from entry into Tolly's Nullah, as it is now an insignificant creek, which runs almost dry at low tide. They are consequently shut off from direct connection with the two great markets of Calcutta, viz., Chitpur on the north and Kidderpore on the south; and in order to obtain access to the Hooghly river, and so to them, they have to follow, instead of the route *viâ* Samukpota, a circuitous course through the Sundarbans and Channel Creek, which adds no less than 200 miles to the length of the journey. Thus, a merchant desirous of conveying a cargo of tea by river steamer from some place in Assam would find that a series of fairly direct and serviceable water channels were available until close to Calcutta, when 10 miles of unnavigable channels would remain to shut his cargo out from the market and necessitate a detour of 200 miles

The scheme proposed to remedy this state of affairs is to canalize Tolly's Nullah so as to provide a channel, from the Bidyadhari river to the Hooghly, which can be used by the large inland steamers and flats employed in the trade with Assam and Narayanganj. Tolly's Nullah would be used for a part of the distance, being widened and deepened. The scheme involves large locks at either end and a smaller lock at Hastings. The line of canal is crossed by two lines of rail and by several important roads; and for a part of the way the land is very valuable. The cost of the scheme is therefore great, and it is doubtful if the revenue which can be hoped for is sufficient to make the project remunerative. It was proposed first by Mr. O. C. Lees in 1902; and in 1903 a preliminary estimate was submitted, which amounted to Rs. 69,00,000. Next year the proposals were placed before the Government of India, the total cost of the project, including dredging plant, being estimated at Rs. 1,19,79,320. That Government, while agreeing that the improvement of Tolly's Nullah is very desirable in order to provide direct access to Calcutta, held that the provision of funds for so costly an undertaking prevented its acceptance. Subsequently in 1906 the discussion was reopened, and since that time various proposals have been considered. Revised estimates are now being prepared.

Another measure which will be of service to the large traffic in boats from the eastern districts is the construction of a canal from Ultadanga to Bamanghata. This work, which is in progress, will save their having to come from Bamanghata to Dhappa through the congested Salt Lake channel; and on entering the canal at Kulti the boats will be able to come into Calcutta without any further lockage. The new canal will pass round the Northern Salt Lake, and will receive and pass out by means of a large sluice the drainage of the country near Dum-Dum. It will thus facilitate drainage as well as navigation. It was at first proposed to align it across the tidal channel which supplies the Northern Salt Lake, but it was found that it would be necessary to pay heavy compensation for injury to fisheries, and the route round the lake was therefore adopted. It takes off the New Cut Canal, near where the railway crosses and alongside the Arathoon Mills, and it falls into the Bamanghata-Kulti canal not far from the former place. The detailed estimate for this work amounts to Rs. 9,10,014.

For the further improvement of the natural and artificial channels connecting Calcutta with the districts of Eastern Bengal and Assam, a Standing Committee was appointed in

1906. On this Committee the Governments of both Provinces and the Agents of the Steamer Companies are represented. Its President is the Chief Engineer and Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Irrigation Department, while its members are the Superintending Engineer of the South-Western Circle of Bengal, the Superintending Engineer of the Eastern Bengal Circle of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and a representative of the Steamer Companies nominated by the Managing Agents of the India General Navigation and Railway Company and the Agents of the Rivers Steam Navigation Company, acting jointly. For the present the scope of the Committee is limited to the channels from Calcutta as far east as Barisal and Madaripur, and its duties are to inspect them periodically and suggest measures of improvement, *e.g.*, any measures of construction and maintenance that may be required to give greater facilities of traffic and measures to control or regulate traffic.

It remains to note the action taken with regard to other natural channels, such as the main stream of the Ganges, with its tributaries and effluents or spill channels, which are largely used both by country boats and by steamers and flats. This matter is one of no little importance, for, whatever extension may be made to railways, the waterways of Bengal must always remain an important means of communication for heavy goods on the main channels, and for general traffic on smaller channels, whether as independent routes or as feeders to the railways. The Public Works Department has for many years endeavoured to improve the low water or dry weather channels of the effluents of the Ganges known as the Nadia rivers, viz., the Bhagirathi, the Jalangi and the Matabhanga, which, when they reunite, form the Hooghly. A considerable sum has been spent annually in endeavouring to effect improvement by means of bamboo and mat spurs or wing dams (known locally as bandels), but with little success, as the volume of water passing down the channels is too small to give much scouring power on the shoals. Recently also for three seasons similar works were tried in the main stream of the Ganges between Patna and Goalundo, where navigation is rendered difficult from the presence of shoals. These works have met with a fair amount of success, quite sufficient to show that in this manner or with suitable dredging plant the low water channel could be much improved without any great outlay.

It was felt, however, that the work could be done much more efficiently by dredgers as in the Mississippi. Before finally deciding on the size and particular type of

dredger to be used, Mr. O. C. Lees, Superintending Engineer of the South-Western Circle (where all the main navigable channels are situated), who had made a special study of the question, visited Europe and America to see the dredging plant in use. A large suction dredger of a modern type (the *Foyers*) was finally sent out in parts and reconstructed in 1907. On being put to work, it was found that certain alterations were necessary, and these are now being made. The dredger, which promises to be a very powerful and effective machine, is intended primarily for deepening the steamer channel through the Madaripur Bil, but it will also be of service in dealing with shoals in other navigable channels; and it should render the improvement of existing channels and the construction of new ones a comparatively easy task.

An important enquiry regarding the measures to be taken for the development of waterways is also to be instituted. Hitherto, though there has been much discussion, no definite line of action has been adopted owing to the absence of detailed knowledge of their regime and of the conditions governing traffic. It has now been decided to take up this matter systematically by instituting a detailed enquiry, the object of which will be, *inter alia*, to ascertain what traffic there is on the various waterways; what difficulties there are in the use of the waterways in their present state; whether the removal of difficulties and the establishment of deeper water in the channels are likely to lead to any material increase in the traffic; to ascertain what methods are suggested for the improvement of the channels, and what the probable cost will be. As a preliminary measure, maps are being prepared showing the existing waterways used for navigation throughout the Province, whether throughout the year or in the rains only.

Another measure affecting the use of the waterways of Bengal is the reduction of the tolls levied by Government on boats plying on the canals and Nadia rivers. Partly to meet the competition of railways with the canals, and partly as a general administrative measure in the interests of the districts served by the canals, considerable reductions have been made in the rates of tolls charged on the Orissa Canals, the Coast Canal, the Midnapore Canal and the Nadia rivers.

RAILWAYS.

With the exception of some small railways constructed by private enterprise, over which the Bengal Government

exercises a certain measure of control, the railways of the Province are administered by the Government of India and the Railway Board. It would therefore be beyond the scope of this review to deal with the extension of railways during the quinquennium or with administrative matters, such as the constitution of the Railway Board in 1905, the important enquiry held in the cold weather of 1906-07 regarding the building of a bridge over the Lower Ganges at Sara Ghat or other sites, and the subsidiary enquiry regarding its proposed location held in the rains of 1908.

One matter only calls for special notice, viz., the construction of a railway from Purulia to Ranchi, which was due to the personal intervention of Sir Andrew Fraser. Within a few months after his assumption of office, His Honour visited Ranchi and was greatly impressed with its potential value as a sanitarium and as a centre for educational institutions. But it was over 70 miles away from any line of railway, and a tedious, wearisome journey in primitive "push-pushes" had to be faced by any one wishing to visit or leave the place. This absence of quick communication with the outer world not only made the station itself practically inaccessible, but also hindered the development of the district, and indeed of the whole Chota Nagpur plateau; and it was a serious obstacle to administrative efficiency. Urged by these considerations, and fully persuaded that the railway would pay, His Honour determined that Ranchi should be linked to the line of railway and earnestly devoted himself to securing the construction of a light line. After a number of initial difficulties the Railway Board were approached and agreed to the project. The construction of a 2 feet 6 inches gauge line was rapidly carried through by the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, and His Honour himself had the pleasure of opening it in November 1907. The prospects of the line are excellent, the traffic on the line having exceeded anticipations, for though the net income of the present year is estimated at 2 lakhs or 5·1 per cent. on the capital outlay, the actual earnings in one quarter only have been over one lakh.

IRRIGATION.

The history of the Irrigation Department during the quinquennium was one of quiet but steady progress. The most important work was the construction of the Tribeni

Canal in the north of Champaran, which was proceeded with in the face of great difficulties due to want of labour and a bad climate. The Dhaka Canal, a small work in the same district, was completed and opened for irrigation. Two important enquiries were also held, one concerning a proposal to construct a canal from the Kamla river in North Bihar, the other regarding the proposals of the Irrigation Commission for the use of the embanked reservoirs called *aharas* in conjunction with the Son Canals. A history of irrigation projects in Bengal is being prepared by the Chief Engineer, Mr. W. A. Inglis, C.S.I., which will be of great value to his successors and to members of this important branch of the Public Works Department, as well as to other Government officers concerned with land administration.

MARINE.

Details of the administration of the Marine Department will be found in the annual administration reports; and it will suffice to notice only a few of its more interesting features. Among these may be mentioned the establishment of wireless telegraphic communication with the pilot vessel off the Sandheads. The system has been working since November 1905, and vessels are now reported 50 miles distant from Saugor to the general advantage of the mercantile community and the shipping agents. The installation of the system has been rendered possible by the purchase of a steam pilot vessel, called the *Fraser;* the pilot brigs, owing to their yards, sails and want of accommodation, being unable to carry the necessary wires, apparatus and staff. This steamer, which has been in use since April 1905, has also greatly contributed to the efficiency of the pilot service, supplying pilots to vessels on many occasions when it would have been hardly possible for the brigs to do so. It has been found that one such vessel is not enough It has to put into Calcutta periodically for coaling, watering, and overhauling of machinery; and then not only does wireless telegraphic communication cease, but the brig which takes its place is not able to keep the station in all weathers. A sister vessel, the *Lady Fraser*, has accordingly been purchased and has recently arrived at Calcutta. With the introduction of these two steamers it will be possible to do away with the antiquated pilot brigs.

With the exception of the assistance which has been given to shipping by the reduction of hospital port dues levied on ships entering the port of Calcutta (first in 1906 from 9 pies to 6 pies and then in 1908 to 4½ pies), the only other important matter connected with the Marine Department which need be noticed is the appointment of a Commission to consider the question of opening a coal port at Luff Point on the Hooghly. The question of providing facilities for the shipment of coal on the right bank of the river Hooghly below the James and Mary shoals was first put forward in 1897 by a Calcutta firm which proposed to build a dock at Gaonkhali. The rapid expansion of the coal trade led to a revival of the scheme in 1900 by the Agent of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, who suggested the establishment of an export coal depot at Luff Point connected by a line of railway with the Bengal-Nagpur Railway at Panchkura station. As it was of great importance that the scheme should not be undertaken without a full investigation of its far-reaching effects, the Government of India assembled a Commission at Calcutta in November 1903 for the purpose of enquiring into and advising upon—(1) the facilities required at Luff Point on the right bank of the Hooghly river for the accommodation and shipment of coal; (2) whether they can be provided; and (3) the agency which should provide the works and control the business at Luff Point. The findings of the Commission were briefly that—(1) A coal depot at Luff Point would be of little use to the industry as a whole, and it is not desirable to establish one there at present. (2) It would be practicable to establish a coal depot if required, but it would probably be costly. (3) If established, it should be in the hands of the Port Commissioners of Calcutta. Sir Andrew Fraser concurred generally with the recommendations of the Commission, and they were also accepted by the Government of India.

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

An account of the more important legislative enactments passed during the administration of Sir Andrew Fraser will be found in other sections, and it is proposed to give here only a brief sketch of the measures taken to improve legislative machinery. In December 1904, His Honour appointed a Committee to consider what action should be taken to place on a satisfactory footing the arrangements for conducting the

legal business of the Government of Bengal. The Committee submitted its report in 1905 recommending certain changes of system; and these changes were sanctioned in 1906. Briefly, they are as follows. So far as the Legislative Department is concerned, it was felt that more use should be made of that Department as legal adviser to the Secretariat, and it was arranged that the Department should take over much of the work of advising upon and drafting statutory rules, bye-laws, notifications and orders, which had formerly been done by the Legal Remembrancer and the Government Solicitor. It was also decided to enlarge the advisory functions of the Legislative Department in other classes of cases arising in the administrative departments, as well as its responsibility in the matter of (*a*) initiating, codifying and consolidating Bills and Statute Law Revision Bills, and (*b*) legal publications. It has accordingly been arranged that the Legislative Department shall publish periodically *Addenda* lists for, and new editions of, the Bengal Code and the Bengal Local Statutory Rules and Orders. To admit of this extra work being undertaken, an Assistant Secretary has been added to the staff. As regards other law officers of Government, (1) the Government Solicitor has been relieved of responsibility for, and connection with, criminal prosecutions in Calcutta; (2) the Public Prosecutor, Calcutta, has been attached to the office of the Legal Remembrancer; (3) the Legal Remembrancer has been authorized to refer to the Government Solicitor for the settlement of conveyances and leases of a complicated character; (4) it has been directed that the Deputy Legal Remembrancer should render more help to the Legal Remembrancer; (5) definite rules have been laid down regarding references made by local officers.

As regards the Legislative Council, amendments in the Rules of Business were made in 1904 at His Honour's instance in order to expedite and improve its work. Their main object was to save unnecessary delay and formalities in the early stages of introduction of Bills and reference of them to Select Committees. It was formerly a common practice to suspend the Rules in order to expedite business at these stages and to save Members the trouble of attendance at merely formal sittings. But frequent suspensions of Rules are open to obvious objection, and it was felt to be better to amend them. This was done by authorizing the introduction of a Bill and its advancement by a further stage at the same meeting at which leave to introduce it is obtained. At the same time, power was taken to authorize the re-commitment of a Bill to a Select Committee.

Another matter taken up by His Honour was the procedure followed by Municipalities and District Boards in making recommendations for the nomination of Members of Council. Experience had shown that ignorance of the names of all the candidates standing for nomination at the time of appointment of representatives may practically disfranchise one or more Boards or Corporations. For instance, a case came to His Honour's notice in which the District Board of a certain district appointed a representative, knowing him to be likely to give his votes for a certain candidate whom the majority wished to see nominated. At the time of the appointment of the representative, the names of all the candidates had not been put before the Board. At the meeting of representatives the representative of the Board in question considered that a candidate, whose name had not been before his Board, was more suitable for membership of the Council than the candidate for whom he was intended to vote; and he therefore gave his votes for that candidate, not being able to consult his Board in the matter. Sir Andrew Fraser considered it very inexpedient that a representative should vote for any person whose candidature had not been considered by the body which he is appointed to represent, and was of opinion that each Municipal Corporation or District Board should, at the time of appointing a representative, have the names of all candidates for nomination before it. For, though not allowed to instruct the representative as to the candidate for whom he is to vote, it is not unreasonable that the Board or Corporation should desire to appoint a representative likely to vote for the candidate whom the majority wish to be nominated. His Honour therefore had a resolution issued suggesting a procedure by which such bodies may be able to see exactly who the candidates are. At the same time, in order to make it clear that District Boards and Municipalities are empowered to bind their delegates to vote for candidates in a definite order, it was laid down that it would "rest with public bodies, if they see fit, to give clear and definite instructions to their representatives as to the way in which they should vote, *i.e.*, as to the candidate for whom they should vote, declaring the name of the candidate to whom all their votes should be given or, if to be given to more than one candidate, the order and manner in which such votes should be given."

A more important change was the introduction of a system by which non-official Members of Council have been admitted to unofficial consultation on the Budget. This

matter, however, is dealt with in the section dealing with General Administration.

In conclusion, mention may be made of the steps taken to secure prompt publication of the Council Proceedings in the *Calcutta Gazette*. Such publication was formerly greatly delayed by Members keeping proofs of their speeches for long periods. His Honour directed in 1903-04 that the proceedings should be published, whenever possible, on the first Wednesday, and never later than the second Wednesday, after the meeting; and in 1908 fresh rules were framed to secure the publication of the debate on the Budget on the first Wednesday after it takes places.

SOCIAL MEASURES.

In the forefront of the social measures carried through by Sir Andrew Fraser must be placed the Disorderly Houses Act, which provides for the discontinuance of brothels and disorderly houses in the vicinity of educational institutions in the mofussil or in the immediate neighbourhood of cantonments. Enquiry had shown that houses of ill-fame were frequently found in close proximity to colleges, schools and hostels in a number of mofussil stations, and that the evil was of sufficient magnitude and importance to call for serious action. As the law stood, however, the authorities were practically powerless to cope with it. Efforts were made from time to time to abate nuisances of this character, but, except in rare instances, in which the landlords of the houses concerned personally interested themselves, all such endeavours were fruitless. The legal difficulty in coping with the evil consisted in the fact that the Courts had held that a prostitute cannot be interfered with simply on the ground of her profession, so long as she behaves herself in an orderly and quiet manner and creates no open scandal by riotous living. Consequently, if brothels were kept in a quiet and orderly manner—and they frequently were so kept, though they were none the less a source of temptation to students attending schools or colleges in the neighbourhood—neither they nor their inmates could be interfered with. The practical difficulty was that, even if interference was possible, it rested with private persons to take the initiative, and respectable men and women were naturally reluctant to come forward as complainants or witnesses in such cases.

Sir Andrew Fraser recognized the necessity of dealing with the evil by legislation; and, under his orders, a Bill was drawn up, the opportunity being taken to include within its scope brothels in the immediate neighbourhood of military cantonments. The Bill was circulated for criticism, and it was found that there was a general consensus of opinion on the part of all persons consulted, whether Government officers, Municipal Commissioners or non-official gentlemen, that legislation on the lines proposed was very desirable. The Bill also received a warm welcome from the non-official Members of Council, and, after certain alterations, was passed into law as Bengal Act III of 1906. Briefly, the provisions of the Act are that a Magistrate of the first class may order the discontinuance of the use of any house (1) in the vicinity of any educational institution, or of any boarding-house, hostel or mess used or occupied by students, if it is used as a brothel or for the purpose of habitual prostitution, or is used by disorderly persons, or to the annoyance of respectable inhabitants of the vicinity; (2) in the immediate neighbourhood of a cantonment, if it is used as a brothel or for the purpose of habitual prostitution. An important proviso is added that such action can be taken only (1) with the sanction or by the order of the District Magistrate; or (2) on the report of the Commissioners of the municipality concerned; or (3) on the complaint of three or more persons resident in the immediate vicinity of the house to which the complaint refers. The Act applies, in the first instance, to all Provincial municipalities, but power is taken to extend it, as occasion requires, to other (non-municipal) areas outside Calcutta.

As soon as this Act had been passed, the question of legislating on similar lines for Calcutta was taken up; for owing to the peculiar circumstances of Calcutta, it was impossible to provide for that city in the general Act for Bengal. The census of 1901 had shown that, in Calcutta proper, one out of every 14 females over 10 years of age, is a prostitute. Prostitution was unpleasantly obtrusive, some of the most crowded streets being notoriously the haunts of fallen women and full of brothels. The trade in women was well organized; and it had large vested interests. In these circumstances, the necessity for legislation had been realized for some time past by Sir Andrew, who had himself had ocular evidence of the extent of the evil in Calcutta, while passing through one of its busiest streets. In 1904 he appointed a small Committee of selected officers to advise what measures should be taken. Next year His Honour

consulted those best qualified to advise among the citizens of Calcutta, including Christian, Muhammadan and Hindu gentlemen. In 1906 he appointed an influential Committee, presided over by Mr. Justice Geidt, to consider the whole question; and in 1907 a Bill, drafted on the lines recommended by that Committee, was introduced in Council.

The Bill took the form of an amendment of the Calcutta Police Act IV of 1866 and of the Calcutta Suburban Police Act II of 1866, the opportunity being taken to make certain amendments in those Acts which experience had shown to be necessary. As regards the general principle of the Bill, there was no dissentient voice; it was approved of by all sections and classes. The only adverse criticisms which were received regarding the actual provisions of the Bill referred to matters of detail, and chiefly to the powers which it was proposed to confer on the Commissioner of Police and his subordinates. These criticisms were carefully considered by the Select Committee; and several clauses of the Bill having been modified accordingly, the Bill passed into law as the Calcutta and Suburban Police (Amendment) Act III of 1907.

Briefly, the Act confers on the Commissioner of Police power to order the discontinuance of the use of any house, room or place which (1) is used as a brothel or disorderly house, or for carrying on the business of a common prostitute, in the vicinity of any educational institution or of any boarding-house, hostel or mess used or occupied by students, or of any place of public worship or recreation; or (2) is so used to the annoyance of respectable inhabitants of the vicinity; or (3) is so used on any main thoroughfare which has been notified by the Lieutenant-Governor on the recommendation of the Municipal Commissioners; or (4) is used as a common place of assignation. The scope of the Act, it will be observed, is more comprehensive than that of the Disorderly Houses Act, owing to the ingenious devices for facilitating vice in Calcutta. One of these is specially provided for in the clause dealing with common places of assignation. Such places are simply empty houses in which women rarely live. They are hired by Indian procurers, who merely keep them in fair order, and have rooms ready for any one who chooses to come in, either on an assignation or after an agreement with the procurer to bring in a woman from outside. It is obvious that such houses are a source of the greatest moral danger.

It will not be out of place to quote the following extract from a speech delivered by a non-official Member

of Council as showing the necessity of such legislation and the manner in which it was regarded by the public:—"For a long time past the people of Calcutta, as well as of the mofussil, have submitted representations to Government, both in public meetings as well as by memorials, that some summary power should be vested in the executive authorities to deal with this class of nuisance. In the city of Calcutta itself, this nuisance has been recognized for a long time past as a grave and a serious danger. I have been told by friends and guardians of boys in the mofussil that they find it very difficult to send their young boys to Calcutta to attend schools, where they find the thoroughfares leading to the schools and colleges so beset with temptations. This measure, if passed into law, will place in the hands of the police an effective weapon in dealing with this class of nuisances, and I hope at no distant time it will free those streets of Calcutta from one of the greatest blots. It is intolerable that our schools, colleges and hostels, which, under the new system of University education, must be a feature of education, should be surrounded, as they are at present, by these houses of ill-fame, and that our young men should be exposed to all the temptations of such life away from parental control. Therefore, on behalf of the interests which I have the honour to represent in this Council, as well as on behalf of the public, I welcome the introduction of this measure."

Protection of children.

A few days before the above Act was passed, a memorial was received from the Society for the Protection of Children in India, strongly representing the urgent necessity of more comprehensive measures, and stating that the Act did not go to the root of the evil, which is the supply of infant girl life to the brothels of Calcutta. In most brothels, it was said, one, and in many cases two and even three infant girls were to be found; and it was urged that power should be taken to remove children, particularly girls of tender years, from houses of ill-fame, and to place them under proper guardians and in surroundings where they would at least have the chance of living clean and healthy lives. This memorial was received too late for action to be taken in the Bill then before Council. Sir Andrew therefore decided to deal with it separately and appointed a small representative Committee to consider the question in all its bearings.

The Committee received full corroboration of the truth of the statements made in the memorial. It was clearly proved that there are a large number of girls living in

Calcutta brothels under circumstances which leave no doubt that they are being brought up to a life of vice:—enquiry disclosed the fact that there are, at least, more than 1,000 girls under 14 years of age in brothels. And there was, the Committee found, ample evidence to demonstrate the existence of a regular traffic having for its object the procurement of female children by purchase from indigent parents and guardians. The necessity of taking action to protect innocent children from a life of shame and degradation was established; and such action could only be taken by means of legislation. A draft Bill has therefore been framed with the object of protecting minor girls from being brought up to a life of prostitution. It will not be proceeded with, however, unless the people themselves show a desire for such legislation. It is essential that such a measure should have public support, especially in India.

FORESTS.

The history of the Forest Department during the quinquennium was one of steady development. Considerable progress was made in opening out forests, by improving means of communication, as far as funds would permit, and in developing them so as to place at the disposal of the public as large quantities as possible of the kinds of produce that are in demand, and also so as to provide for increased or continuous future supplies. Most of the forests, however, were more or less ruined before being placed in charge of the Department, and the area under its control is comparatively small. Before the reconstitution of the Province the area of reserved forests was 6,409 square miles, and of protected forests, 3,428 square miles. The area of the former has now been reduced to 4,240 square miles, while that of the latter is 3,392 square miles, representing 3·43 and 2·74 per cent., respectively, of the total area of the Province.

Apart from the administration of the Government forests, efforts have been made to conserve and develop the forests in Feudatory States, which have hitherto suffered from reckless exploitation, as well as in private estates managed by the Court of Wards. Steps have also been taken to improve the management of protected forests in Government estates, with the object of supplying more fully the wants of the raiyats; and though it is difficult in such a short time to point to very decisive results, their management has been placed on a

better footing than five years ago. The only other matter which calls for notice under this head is the establishment in 1906-07 of a training school at Kurseong for selected Foresters and Deputy Rangers. At this school they go through a brief practical course, and it is hoped that its establishment will not only lead to an increase of efficiency, but also help to produce a better class of recruits for the lower grades of Forest Rangers.

DRAINAGE.

In the section dealing with Sanitation an account has been given of the enquiry held by the Drainage Committee, and reference has been made to their examination of schemes for the drainage of malarious areas in the Presidency Division. Mention will here be made only of the drainage schemes at work or prepared during the quinquennium. These come under four main heads. The first class consists of schemes under the Bengal Drainage Act, intended for the benefit of agriculture by the drainage of swampy areas, which are undertaken at the initiative of landlords. No schemes of this class were taken up during the quinquennium; but Drainage Commissioners were appointed for the Amta drainage scheme in the Howrah district, a scheme proposed over 30 years ago. The second class consists of works undertaken under the Bengal Sanitary Drainage Act in cases in which it can be shown that drainage will be beneficial to public health. Here, the initiative rests with the District Board, and the scheme, if accepted by the Board, is carried out at the cost of the owners and occupiers of lands which are held to be beneficially affected; but, as the economic benefit is more remote, grant-in-aid may be given from general revenues.

The only scheme which has actually been accepted so far under this latter Act is that known as the Magra Hat scheme, which deals with a tract of 290 square miles in the southern part of the 24-Parganas district, and is now in progress. The estimated cost is a little over 20 lakhs, and, to meet this, Government has agreed to contribute 5 lakhs in cash, making no charge for the executive and supervising staff employed on the work, and to advance the remainder to the District Board, which will be allowed to defer payment of interest and repayment of principal until the charges have been apportioned, and recovery is being made from the proprietors of the tract affected. When

complete, the work will be maintained by Government, which will receive any income derivable from it in the shape of navigation tolls and fishery rents. The necessity of the scheme may be gathered from a report submitted nearly 30 years ago in which it was stated:—"From want of drainage and protection, the productiveness of the locality is only a fraction of what it should be; and the inhabitants, although they may be supposed to be inured to their semi-amphibious condition by a long course of preparation resulting in the survival of the fittest, are affected similarly to those living in the vicinity of the permanent *bils*. Fever is constantly present in every village, and other classes of sickness find a congenial home in the unwholesome atmosphere prevailing in this extensive locality." Two other schemes of this nature are at present in the initial stage, *i.e.*, they are being considered by Drainage Commissioners and the District Boards. They contemplate the drainage of the country near Barasat in the 24-Parganas and near the head-quarters of the Jessore district, the former being known as the Nawai and Sunti scheme and the second as the Bhairab scheme.

The third class consists of schemes for the drainage of municipal areas. In such cases Government gives from Provincial revenues a grant-in-aid to a municipality, and the municipal area benefited is assessed under the Municipal Act for its share of the cost. One scheme of this nature is the Baghjola scheme, which has been prepared for the benefit of a number of municipalities on the eastern bank of the Hooghly to the north of Calcutta. It is proposed to effect the drainage of those municipalities by means of the Ultadanga-Bamanghata Canal already referred to. A somewhat similar scheme is being worked out for Berhampore in the Murshidabad district, where it is proposed that Government should construct an outfall channel, which will lower the level of the water in the large depressions near the town.

The fourth class of drainage schemes consists of projects carried out under the Bengal Embankment Act. The most important scheme of this class undertaken during the quinquennium was the drainage of the Argoal circuit, a tract of land, extending over nearly 19 square miles, in the low-lying part of the Contai subdivision of Midnapore. This area is enclosed by an embankment, the lands outside which have been raised by deposits of silt to a much higher level than the interior lands. The lower lands are water-logged even in ordinary years, and when the embankment breaches, as it does occasionally, the enclosed lands are devastated and the homesteads

flooded. A scheme for the drainage of this tract was therefore prepared at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,29,000, the arrangement being that the cost should be advanced by Government and then apportioned between it and the zamindars according as they are benefited by the work. It has now been practically completed, and will, it is hoped, improve materially the conditions of this water-logged tract.

EMBANKMENTS.

There is little of special importance to notice under this heading. The embankment system in the deltaic districts of Orissa, a tract specially liable to disastrous floods, has been developed as far as possible; and the policy of providing escapes in embankments, which has been successful in Cuttack, is gradually being given effect to in Puri. A scheme for moderating the spill from the Damodar river through the Begua breach has been prepared, and it has been decided to carry it out as soon as funds are available. The object of this scheme is to afford some relief to the country on the right bank of the Damodar, which is at present always liable to inundation, and also to restore in the dry season a supply of water for domestic purposes to villages along the banks of the original channel of the river in its lower portion. The embankment known as the Gupta Bandh in the Monghyr district has been taken under the charge of Government, and is to be remodelled in order to protect a portion of the Begusarai subdivision from the floods of the Ganges.

ROADS AND BUILDINGS.

The administration of Sir Andrew Fraser was marked by great activity in the Roads and Buildings branch of the Public Works Department, the outlay on communications and miscellaneous public improvements (under the head "Provincial —Civil Buildings") being Rs. 2,82,97,359 in the quinquennium ending in 1907-08 (as shown in the margin), as against Rs. 1,65,49,583 in the previous quinquennium; while contributions rose from Rs. 10,31,262 to Rs. 12,13,198. As regards communications, the most important work undertaken was the construction of the High Level Tista Valley road in the

	Rs.
1903-04	35,56,615
1904-05	48,05,609
1905-06	53,15,084
1906-07	57,27,344
1907-08	59,02,707

Darjeeling district, which will form the main route to Sikkim. This was determined upon because the low level road was unsafe when the turbulent Tista was in high flood. Construction was commenced in January 1904, and the total expenditure up to the end of 1907-08 was 9½ lakhs. Much has also been done to open out the Sambalpur group of Feudatory States by improving old roads and constructing new ones, *e.g.*, the road from Sambalpur to Sonpur is being improved and realigned, a new road is being constructed from Sambalpur to Bolangir, the headquarters of the Patna State, and the Cuttack-Sambalpur road is being improved. Also in Chota-Nagpur, feeder roads have been extended in Palamau; the Ranchi-Daltonganj road has been taken over by the Department and is being reconstructed in parts; the Ranchi-Chaibassa road has been improved; and a road, 103 miles long, from Khunti to Kolunga has been projected, in order to provide the south-west portion of the Ranchi district, which is at present without roads, with an outlet to the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, and also to make it accessible to relief in time of famine.

Among other miscellaneous works taken in hand may be mentioned the improvement of Dalhousie Square, the maintenance and management of which were taken over by Government from the Calcutta Corporation in 1905. Rupees 1,34,000 were spent on the improvement of the square; and after its completion an equestrian statue of the late Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Woodburn was erected on the northern side of the square. A further improvement was also made in the Calcutta Maidan, at a cost of over a lakh, by laying out the Curzon Gardens.

A long list of the buildings erected during the quinquennium, jails, hospitals, public offices, etc., will be found in the different annual administration reports and need not be repeated here. Mention, however, should be made of one prominent feature of His Honour's administration, viz., the acquisition of land for, and the construction of, official residences. The necessity of such residences is well-known to those who have experience of mofussil stations, in some of which officials and their wives have before now had to live in tents or dâk bungalows, or live out of the station altogether for want of houses in it. Even where there are sufficient houses, they often are not only ill-built, cramped and unhealthy, but have insanitary surroundings It appeared to Sir Andrew to be the manifest duty of Government to provide its officers with houses which should at least be well-built and healthy. There is another aspect of this question which seemed to His

Honour to be of almost equal importance, viz., the necessity of preserving the civil stations of Bengal. In many cases the station has been split up and dispersed over a considerable area, officers being spread all over it in such houses as they are able to secure. The result is that there is nothing left in the shape of a civil station, and that Government officers lose that sense of cohesion which is so valuable a factor in mofussil life. To remedy this state of affairs, His Honour endeavoured to secure, as far as possible, in each station a compact central site, which would be the civil station proper and in which the officers of Government could live and work together.

AGRICULTURE.

Reorganization of the Department.

In a previous section it has been explained that the Department of Agriculture was first constituted in 1885, and was under the supervision of the Director of Land Records, who was also responsible for the control of settlement operations throughout the Province. The Department was thus divided into two branches, one concerned with agriculture and the other with settlements. The system imposed a heavy burden on the Director; and as the volume of settlement work increased year by year, it became more and more difficult for him to give adequate attention to the agricultural development of Bengal. Some measure of relief was given in 1904 by the appointment, so necessary from a practical point of view, of an expert agriculturist as Deputy Director in order to assist the Director in the supervision of experimental farms and agricultural experiments, besides four travelling overseers, whose duty it was to superintend the experimental work carried on in Government and Wards' estates; but owing to lack of funds further advance was not possible. In 1905, however, the Government of India promised to make a special annual grant for the improvement of agriculture; and the financial difficulty having disappeared, an entirely separate Department of Agriculture was constituted in October 1905, the first Director being Mr. C. E. A. W. Oldham, I.C.S., who was well fitted to organize the new Department.

A staff of qualified officers has also been appointed; and the Director is now assisted by a Deputy Director, Assistant Director, and three European experts, viz., an agricultural chemist, an economic botanist, who is assisted by an entomological assistant and a mycological assistant, and an agriculturist, who is to be Principal of the Provincial Agricultural

College. There are also three Assistant Professors or Superintendents of Farms, and each Division has been given an Agricultural Inspector. Proposals are, moreover, under consideration for the establishment of a regular Agricultural Service, so as to afford trained agricultural students definite prospects of employment, and attract a good class of officers.

Agricultural Associations.

Before proceeding to mention the reforms which have followed the reorganization of the Department, reference may be made to the steps taken by Sir Andrew, before that measure, to create an agency by which agricultural progress might be advanced by and through the people themselves. His Honour found, when he became Lieutenant-Governor, that the Agricultural Department had admittedly failed to make known among the people the results which had been attained by experiment. Accounts of the various operations undertaken were published annually, but they did not reach the cultivating classes; and, even in the vicinity of the various agricultural farms, improved methods of cultivation were not adopted. There were many zamindars and merchants keenly interested in agriculture, but their sympathy and co-operation had not been enlisted.

In these circumstances, it seemed to His Honour that an agency was wanted to disseminate agricultural knowledge and to awaken further interest in, and discussion of, the agricultural development of the Province. Experience in the Central Provinces had shown him what immense advantage followed the creation of advisory Agricultural Associations; and he was convinced that there was a great field of work open to such Associations in Bengal. He therefore decided, as a first step, to establish a Provincial Agricultural Association at Calcutta to co-operate with the Director in connection with agricultural experiments and the dissemination of the results of such experiments. It would also advise Government as regards the programme of work of the Agricultural Department, as well as concerning all matters affecting the improvement of agriculture and the best method of reclaiming waste lands. With these objects, a Provincial Agricultural Association was formed in 1904; and this was followed by the establishment of Divisional Associations in each Division and of District Associations in most districts.

The Provincial College.

Of the reforms which followed the reorganization of the Department the most important is the foundation of a Provincial Agricultural College, *i.e.*, a Central College for the training of suitable men to carry on the work of the Department. Some years ago an attempt was made to do

something in the way of agricultural education by sending officers of the Provincial Service to be trained at Cirencester in England. The scheme was not very successful owing to the want of a suitable organization; and the result was that many of the students trained in England took up other branches of work on their return. An attempt was also made to give students a two years' training in agricultural subjects at the Civil Engineering College, Sibpur, but the best men were given appointments in the Provincial and Subordinate Civil Services, and their services were lost to agriculture. Neither schemes therefore were successful; and His Honour recognized that other arrangements must be made if the Department was to attain its full development. That could be done only by recruiting local men of the best of the classes which aspire to appointments in the public service, and by training them as experts in agricultural science.

It was at first thought that the agricultural students of Bengal might be trained at the Imperial Agricultural Research Institute at Pusa in the Darbhanga district; but this idea was abandoned, as the object of that institution being mainly research work, it was decided that the experts on the staff should not be engaged in teaching the elements of agriculture, and that whatever teaching they undertook should be of an advanced kind. Eventually, it was determined that Bengal should have a Provincial College of its own, where natives of the Province could receive a sound elementary training in agriculture, and from which the best graduates could go to the Imperial Institution at Pusa and so be fitted for the highest appointments in the Province. A suitable site for the college was found at Sabaur, 4 miles from Bhagalpur, and the foundation stone was laid by Sir Andrew Fraser in August 1908.

The college is designed to fulfil two distinct objects, viz., (1) to train men in scientific and practical agriculture, and (2) to provide a research station for Provincial problems. Research and experimental work will be carried on, and at the same time students will be trained, who will be able to diffuse through the Province its results. It is hoped that in this way there will be an ample supply of Indians equipped with a scientific and practical knowledge of agriculture and able to supply the staff of all other agricultural institutions in the Province. The underlying principle is that the ultimate development of the agricultural resources of the land must be in the hands of Indians trained in their own country. In time, qualified men will be in a position to take the place of the present European experts; and meanwhile

in order to assist the Director in guiding the development of agriculture, eight men, who have received a preliminary training at the Civil Engineering College, Sibpur, have been sent to the Cornell University in the United States for further training in scientific and practical agriculture.

Experimental and demonstration farms.

A necessary corollary to this scheme is the establishment of experimental farms at selected centres. A portion of each farm is devoted to experiments undertaken with special reference to the wants of the tract within which it is situated; and a portion serves as a seed farm for distribution of seed to the public. For this purpose, each administrative Division has been taken as constituting an agricultural tract, for in no two Divisions are agricultural conditions exactly similar. Over 200 acres of land were taken up at Bankipore in 1906, and considerable progress has been made in establishing an experimental station with suitable buildings. The site of the College at Sabaur includes an area of over 200 acres representative of the Bhagalpur Division. In 1908 over 200 acres were acquired at Chinsura representative of the Gangetic alluvium; and arrangements are being made to acquire additional land at Cuttack, where a small farm was established in 1904 to demonstrate the value of irrigation. Sites for farms representative of the laterite area and of the Chota Nagpur plateau have been chosen at Kharagpur and Ranchi respectively, and steps will shortly be taken for the acquisition of the land. In addition to these representative stations, some 50 acres of land were taken up in Chaibasa for a tusser silk farm, and small temporary jute seed farms were established at Berhampore and Purnea. Lately, an area of some 50 acres has been taken up at Fraserganj for demonstration purposes, and a hill farm at Kalimpong has been subsidized by Government.

It is intended that the experimental farms shall be manned, in the main, by passed students of the Provincial College, and serve as the field in which the science acquired there will be put to a severe practical test before it is offered to the cultivators. They are to be supplemented by small demonstration farms, which are intended to bring home to the peasantry any improvements effected in the experimental farm that may be suited to the tract of which it forms the centre. Such farms cannot be started till the experimental farms have got definite facts to demonstrate, and will therefore be opened gradually. In the meantime, the farms already existing in Government, Wards' and private estates are being used to demonstrate such improvements as have been or are being established.

Among miscellaneous measures adopted for the dissemination of agricultural knowledge a leading place must be given to the steps taken in collating and publishing for practical use the experience already gained—a matter in which Bengal was very backward. Though many experiments had been made for several years before the reorganization of the Agricultural Department, the results were not available in a handy form. Though notes on particular crops had been prepared, they had not been worked up for publication and distribution. The publication of agricultural literature has now been put on a new footing. Leaflets in English and the vernaculars have been distributed widely; and since 1907 a Quarterly Journal has been published for the benefit of members of Agricultural Associations. By these means the work of the Department has been brought to the notice of those directly connected with the cultivator. The work in connection with agricultural fairs and shows has also been reorganized, this being an easy and attractive means of showing cultivators what they can do to improve their crops. Another important development has been the establishment in Calcutta of a central store for the supply of different varieties of guaranteed seed and improved agricultural implements. In this way the Director has become a merchant on a considerable scale, but the seeds and implements are issued at the bare cost price. A manual of arboriculture has also been prepared; and a class of arboriculture has been instituted at the Royal Botanic Garden at Sibpur for the training of overseers and others deputed each year by the different District Boards.

Special enquiries.

A number of enquiries were made during the quinquennium in regard to the cultivation of special crops, such as indigo and jute. A subsidy of Rs. 50,000 per annum was granted for the improvement of the indigo industry, and research work was steadily carried on. Valuable experiments in the cultivation of jute were instituted, a special officer being appointed Fibre Expert in 1904; and on his transfer to Eastern Bengal and Assam, the Department continued to carry on the production of good seed. For the purpose of demonstrating the value of nurseries with mulberry plantations for the production of pure seed, a subsidy was granted to the Bengal Silk Committee until 1908. In that year Government, accepting the proposals of a special Silk Committee appointed to consider the causes of the decline of the silk industry and the measures required for its revival, itself undertook a scheme devised for restoring its prosperity; and to carry it into effect appointed a Sericultural Superintendent with an

adequate staff at Berhampore in Murshidabad. In order to assist the tusser silk industry a farm was, as already stated, established at Chaibasa; and the subsidy to the Tea Association was continued. In 1905 an officer was placed on special duty in connection with well-irrigation. He visited the United Provinces, and made himself acquainted with the practice of irrigation from temporary wells, which have proved in famine years so valuable a resource in the eastern districts of those Provinces. He then toured round the districts of the Patna, Bhagalpur and Chota Nagpur Divisions in order to ascertain whether there are any insuperable obstacles to the extension to those districts of the methods of well-irrigation which prevail in the United Provinces, and to indicate localities in which the sinking of wells may be beneficial. As a result of this enquiry, Government has sanctioned the entertainment of a staff of well-borers, under an expert, to make trial borings and to improve the water-supply of existing wells by boring through strata impervious to the tools of the ordinary cultivator. An officer, with headquarters at Bankipore, has been specially appointed for training borers, and is now at work in the districts of the Patna and Bhalgalpur Divisions.

Miscellaneous. Among other miscellaneous duties undertaken by the Department may be mentioned the preparation of rainfall statistics and the weekly weather and crop reports. The Department has also been engaged in making a census of wages in urban and rural tracts, the statistics at present obtained being inaccurate. Lastly, it may be mentioned that a ten years' programme of work has been drawn up, and that, whereas the budget allotment for 1902-03 was Rs. 1,21,700, that for the present year is 5 lakhs.

VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

Civil Veterinary Department. Similar progress has been made in the Veterinary Department, an important scheme of reorganization being sanctioned in 1907. This scheme provides for a large increase in the veterinary staff of the Province, in order that its needs may be adequately met. It is to be introduced gradually, as funds and trained men become available, and when it is in full operation, the strength of the Provincial and Subordinate Civil Veterinary Service will be 9 Deputy Superintendents, 30 Inspectors and 229 Veterinary Assistants, the posts being pensionable. In this way a staff will be gradually formed,

capable ultimately of supplying every subdivision of the Province with one stationary and one itinerant Veterinary Assistant. Another reform carried out in 1908 was the separation of the Bengal Veterinary College from the Civil Veterinary Department, a separate officer being appointed in charge of each. The Principal of the College has consequently been relieved of peripatetic work in the interior, and is now in a position to give full attention to that institution, which has expanded in a remarkable way of late years, to exercise closer supervision over the working of the Glanders and Farcy Act, the contagious diseases hospital, veterinary laboratory and hostels, and to take a more active personal interest in the training of students than has hitherto been possible. The Superintendent of the Civil Veterinary Department has been placed in sole charge of the work of inspection and control in the mofussil, which includes touring, inspection of veterinary dispensaries, improvement of cattle breeding, prevention of animal diseases, etc. As showing how much the operations of the Department have expanded, it may be mentioned that 9 new dispensaries have been founded and 19 itinerant Veterinary Assistants appointed since 1903. A herd of *dehati* cattle has also been established at Pusa and a herd of Siri cattle at Kalimpong, and much has been done to improve cattle breeding at the Sripur farm of the Hathwa Raj. Further advance may be expected to follow the recent amendment of the Local Self-Government Act, by which District Boards have been authorized to incur expenditure on veterinary work.

The Bengal Veterinary College.

In no branch of veterinary work, however, has progress been more marked than in the Bengal Veterinary College, which is the central institution for all veterinary work in the Province and the recruiting ground of the veterinary staff of Bengal, Eastern Bengal and Assam. Sir Andrew Fraser took a keen personal interest in the future of the college, and with his assistance a comprehensive scheme was drawn up for its development and for the erection of the buildings necessary to make it worthy of the Province. This scheme was followed until the present year, when unfortunately funds were not available to carry out the building projects. During the previous four years, however, the following buildings were erected:—a research laboratory (called the Raymond Research Laboratory), a new hostel to accommodate 156 boarders (called the Fraser Hostel), a dissection room, a new *post-mortem* room, a large operating theatre for horses, three cattle wards, an operation hall for cattle, and quarters for the Senior Hospital Surgeon,

Junior Hospital Surgeon, Stable Overseer and 200 menials. The site upon which the college stands has been rendered more sanitary by the clearing of jungle and filling in of six large tanks in the vicinity. The staff has been strengthened by the addition of two lecturers, one Hospital Surgeon, one Veterinary Assistant, one Assistant Manager for the hostel, a riding master, a compounder and a large menial staff.

As a proof of the remarkable expansion of the college, may be mentioned the fact that the applications of students have been greater than the number of vacancies; that they have come not only from the Provinces of Bengal and Eastern Bengal and Assam, but also from the United Provinces, Central Provinces, Madras, Burma, and even from the Punjab; and that the number of students on the college rolls was 137 last year as against 30 in 1902-03. The hospital attached to the college has also increased in usefulness, as is shown by the fact that last year 4,132 cases were admitted against 2,385 in 1902-03. During the last 4 years 94 veterinary graduates have passed through the college. Of these, 11 have been employed by the Bengal Government, and 39 by District and Local Boards. Of the remainder, 32 have been employed by other Administrations and 6 by private individuals. The Glanders and Farcy Act was also introduced into Calcutta and suburbs during the Lieutenant-Governorship of Sir Andrew Fraser, and there are at present 8 Inspectors and 12 constables employed on this work.

CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT SOCIETIES.

The problem of establishing some organization or method by which the peasantry can obtain the advances necessary for carrying on cultivation, without having to pay usurious rates of interest and without being given undue facilities for incurring debt, had been under consideration some time before Sir Andrew Fraser became Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. During his tenure of office a notable advance was made towards its solution by the enactment of the Co-operative Credit Societies Act (X of 1904), which provides for the constitution and control of co-operative credit societies. The principle underlying that Act may be gathered from the remarks made by the Viceroy, Lord Curzon :—"The promotion of agricultural enterprise by an increase in the available capital may be described as a prime duty of any Government administering a large rural population. All

producers, even the poorest, require capital, and the Indian raiyat by no means least. But the conditions under which alone he can procure it in this country are so onerous, he is so apt to dissipate it when acquired by a sort of traditional improvidence, and the consequences of his indebtedness are so disastrous and even appalling, that there seems to be a special obligation upon the Government of India to come to his assistance in such ways as we legitimately can. . . . We are initiating an experiment, which is to make the cultivating classes themselves the borrowers, improving their credit, developing their thrift, and training them to utilize for their own benefit the great advantage which the experience of other countries has shown to lie in the principle of mutual co-operation."

Sir Andrew Fraser selected Mr. W. R. Gourlay, I.C.S., to administer the Act in Bengal; and that officer, after visiting Ireland, Germany, Italy and Egypt, seeing the working of co-operative credit societies, and consulting the leaders of the co-operative movements in those countries, began his work as Registrar in the winter of 1904. Subsequently, in 1907, on his appointment as Director of Agriculture, he was made Director of Co-operative Credit Societies with a Registrar working under his supervision, in order to bring the Departments of Agriculture and Co-operative Credit into closer association. Sir Andrew Fraser thought that the union of these two offices in one officer, who understands the people and their agricultural conditions, was sure to be of advantage. Mr. Gourlay is a young man and ought to stay in these offices for some time and push the work of both Departments.

When a Registrar was first appointed, there were only 58 pioneer societies, founded mainly through the energy of Mr. P. C. Lyon, I.C.S., who was on special duty with this object in 1901-02. Of these more than one-third have since disappeared, for many of them were founded by men anxious to assist the raiyat, but whose knowledge did not equal their enthusiasm; while others were established under the orders of officers anxious to do their duty, but unable to attend to the details themselves. Many societies thus formed died after a short period through want of interest, or became institutions where a few men paid a tax each year into the treasury on account of a sum of money borrowed by them some years before. To-day there are nearly 400 societies with assets of Rs. 2,44,000 and liabilities of Rs. 2,31,000; while the number of members has risen to 1,350. This is only a beginning, but it has at least been made clear that co-operative credit

societies will flourish in any part of Bengal, given two conditions, viz., the bond of a village community and one literate member to keep the records of the society.

The societies are founded on Raiffeisen principles, viz., (1) unlimited liability; (2) operations restricted to a small area; (3) no shares and consequently no dividends; (4) no payments for services rendered; (5) repayment of the loan from the profits or savings effected; (6) an indivisible reserve fund; (7) the moral as well as the material benefit of the members. They are small democratically managed groups of agriculturists joined together for the purpose of making their individual securities of greater value and of enabling each member to obtain benefits which, though possible for all when united, are impossible for each individually. All those who know rural India know well that a character for honesty exists in the villages, and it is this character for honesty which forms the security of the society. "The work," writes Mr. Gourlay, "of establishing these societies in individual villages has succeeded, and there seems no reason why similar societies should not be founded in any village in Bengal. One thing, however, remains to be done. These village societies must be organised into unions before they can be controlled and financed on a large scale, and this work is at present occupying the attention of the officers concerned. As soon as this problem has been solved, we shall have gone a long way towards solving the great problem of Indian indebtedness, and it only remains for the people of India themselves to make known the principles of co-operation and assist their less informed brethren by teaching them self-help and thrift."

EDUCATION.

Collegiate education.

During the administration of Sir Andrew Fraser the whole course of collegiate education was affected by the enactment of the Universities Act of 1904, to give effect to which the Calcutta University promulgated revised regulations in 1906. It is unnecessary to give a detailed account of the changes involved by the Act or of the constitution of the Calcutta University. It will be sufficient to say that the object aimed at, so far as collegiate education is concerned, was "a University which shall gather round it collegiate institutions proud of affiliation and worthy to enjoy it; whose students, housed in residential quarters in

close connection with the parent University, shall feel the inner meaning of a corporate life." To Bengal educationalists the Act embodied what is frequently described as "the new ideal," though it is old and familiar enough. As explained in the report of a Commission recently appointed by the Calcutta University to inspect mofussil colleges, the University in the beginning ostensibly aimed at nothing but examining, though it recoginized affiliated colleges, and more or less rigidly required that candidates should be sent up by affiliated colleges. "This involved as at least latent a conception of education distinct from mere examination. . . The movement which has resulted in the reconstruction of the Universities by the new Act is virtually the explicit definition of the new educational ideal. Every tendency of the time points to the residential college with its full social life, which has superseded the original conception of the college as a place where students are prepared for examinations by means of lectures. The University is no longer content with lectures; it requires a collegiate life." Two years before the University issued their revised regulations, Sir Andrew Fraser was endeavouring to translate the "new ideal" into practice by the establishment of a residential college which should serve as a model for all other colleges in Bengal.

Ranchi College.

His Honour found during his tours throughout the Province that there was a great desire on the part of many influential zamindars, Indian gentlemen serving Government in such offices as those of Senior Deputy Collectors, District Officers or Subordinate Judges, professional men such as barristers, pleaders and doctors practising in the interior, and other gentlemen of similar position and circumstances, to have a college healthy in its physical and moral surroundings, to which they could send their boys. Over and over again he found that zamindars who resided on their estates and not in Calcutta, had felt the need of an institution where their sons would be under proper discipline and receive a sound education. These zamindars represented how unsatisfactory were the arrangements which they found it possible to make for the private tuition of their boys at home, and on the other hand how difficult it was to make anything like satisfactory arrangements for sending them to any of the existing colleges. Muhammadan gentlemen, who are much attracted by the system at Aligarh, but do not like to send their sons to a college outside the Province, where they lose touch with the concerns of their homes, were also very anxious for the establishment of a somewhat similar institution in

this Province. In the same way, several Indian District Officers and Judges, and professional and business men, whose life's work has to be done in the interior, urged that some scheme should be devised which would hold out the hope of their sons being educated in a morally and physically healthy atmosphere under proper discipline and supervision.

The various means which suggested themselves to the Lieutenant-Governor and to such gentlemen were discussed over and over again. The claims of the Presidency College were fully considered; but in the interior, among many zamindars and other Indian gentlemen of high position, there is a strong prejudice against sending their sons to Calcutta for education, unless they happen themselves to have a home in Calcutta to which their sons can go. The root of this objection is that the climate of Calcutta is not a bracing climate physically or morally. Physically it is not such a climate as a man would choose for his son in the years when his constitution is being formed. Morally the dangers arising from the immorality which seems inseparable from the life of a great city, and from the distractions of all kinds which tend to draw students from their studies, are real and well recognized.

Gradually it became clear to the Lieutenant-Governor that the best solution of the problem would be to have a good residential college at Ranchi, where the students would be in a healthy climate. This proposal commended itself to all the gentlemen who were privately consulted; and many of them promised to co-operate heartily in carrying out the scheme. In order further to ventilate the proposal, the Lieutenant-Governor in 1904 held a meeting at Belvedere which was attended by sixty-five representatives of the classes indicated; fifty-nine more wrote letters expressing their warm sympathy with the scheme, which had previously been outlined. At the meeting, His Honour more fully expounded his views and these were most cordially received. The Lieutenant-Governor then left the meeting; and the matter was placed entirely in the hands of those present. A Committee was immediately formed independently to raise subscriptions. A number of gentlemen subsequently came forward offering large sums for the provision of hostel accommodation in connection with the proposed college; and a sum of over three lakhs of rupees was subscribed. After much discussion the scheme has received the sanction of the Secretary of State.

The objects of the college are briefly as follow. As a residential college well equipped, well staffed and managed on advanced lines, in which the students will lead a corporate

life, it is intended to promote the interests of University education throughout Bengal. It is intended to supply a local want by providing a Government college for Chota Nagpur, the only Division in which there is no Government college. And it is to supply a long-felt want for the Province as a whole, viz., that of a college for the sons of the nobility, the zamindars and the professional classes. This last feature is of especial importance, for under present conditions in Bengal landholders and other well-to-do sections of the community have no regularly constituted college to which to send their sons, and do not like to send them to middle class institutions intended for boys of a social standing lower than their own. Consequently, private tuition with all its disadvantages often takes the place of collegiate education.

As regards the location of the new college, Ranchi has been fixed on after an exhaustive examination of other possible sites owing to its many natural advantages. As is well known, its climate is excellent. While there is a strong disinclination on the part of parents resident in Bengal proper to send their sons to either Bihar or Orissa, and *vice versa*, there does not appear to be the same disinclination to send them to Chota Nagpur. There is a marked tendency on the part of the upper and middle classes in Bengal to settle there; and already several gentlemen have set themselves to acquire plots of land at Ranchi, with a view to having their sons educated at the college. Lastly, the one difficulty which some gentlemen felt in regard to sending their sons to Ranchi, viz., the distance from the line of rail, has been removed by the construction of the railway from Purulia.

The college will aim for the present at providing accommodation for about 150 or 200 students. Provision will be made for teaching the Arts course up to the B. A. standard, arrangements being made for instruction in Physics as a part of that course. In order to deal effectively with the subjects in which instruction will be given to students who undertake a Government course, and also in order to maintain a proportion of one professor to 15 students, there will be a staff of ten professors. It has further been decided to have four hostels attached to the college, each supervised by an European and Indian officer jointly. Three of these will each contain about 40 or 45 students, two of them being for Hindus and one for Muhammadans. The remaining hostel, which will be especially reserved for sons of zamindars, will accommodate about 30 students and will consist of two separate parts, for Hindus and Muhammadans, respectively. The hostels will be constructed from funds privately contributed

and will be maintained entirely from fees levied from the students. It is not intended that these hostels shall in any way be regarded as private buildings, and they will therefore be the property of Government.

A special feature of the college will be the arrangements made for religious instruction. There is a strong desire expressed by thoughtful men of all classes throughout the Province that, while their sons are being educated, their religious instruction should not be wholly intermitted or abandoned. Parents, both Hindu and Muhammadan, realize that it is disastrous for their sons to be brought up with no thought of religion. It is urged that young men, while they secure great intellectual advantages at school or college, too frequently see that religion is practically ignored, and that they not unnaturally come to think that religion belongs only to the inferior classes of intellect or the more backward stages of education. Parents, and especially mothers, are utterly dissatisfied with this state of things. Sir Andrew Fraser felt great sympathy with them in their dissatisfaction; and a scheme has been framed for enabling the students to receive religious instruction without infringing on the recognized principle that Government shall not interfere in religious matters.

Briefly, facilities are to be afforded in the hostels for giving religious instruction out of lecture hours to such students as wish to receive it; but their attendance must be voluntary. No rule is to be made restricting admission to the hostels to those who are willing to receive such instruction, or requiring the students either to attend or to offer reasons for non-attendance. No member of the staff of the college will be chosen with reference to his fitness or willingness to give religious instruction. The Principal will not have the power of approving any teacher for such a purpose; though he will have the power of excluding from a hostel any person who, for disciplinary reasons, is considered an undesirable person for the students to associate with. It has further been decided that there shall be Visiting Committees, the members of which will be selected by the Lieutenant-Governor from among persons interested in education generally or especially interested in the college itself. These Visiting Committees will be allowed to visit the hostels, and to make any suggestions to the college authorities in regard to them. All arrangements connected with the religious instruction to be given on the lines sketched above, will be entrusted to the members professing the religion of the students attending the hostels in question, *i.e.*,

the Hindu members of the Visiting Commitee will arrange for the Hindu Hostel, and the Muhammadan members for the Muhammadan Hostel. The instruction will be of a very general nature, to which no Hindu or Muhammadan, of whatever sect he may be, can take exception. It will be confined to prayer and the delivery of addresses in a room set apart for the purpose; and no public celebration of festivals or public acts of worship will be allowed within the college precincts. The Principal will be responsible that nothing takes place which could possibly offend the religious feelings of students, but otherwise Government will have no direct responsibility, financial or administrative, for the religious teaching.

Presidency College.

The extension of the Presidency College in Calcutta was another scheme of the first importance initiated by Sir Andrew Fraser. Such extension has been rendered necessary by the introduction of the new University regulations, which require that due provision shall be made for properly equipped laboratories in connection with the teaching of science, for residences for the head of a college and some members of the teaching staff, and for hostel accommodation for students not residing with their parents or guardians. It was urged by some that the college should be transferred to a better site in the suburbs of Calcutta, where ample space would be available for new buildings, hostels and recreation grounds. Others preferred the present site on account of the traditions with which it is associated and because of its accessibility in the case of students living with parents and guardians in Calcutta. On these and other grounds they urged that the college should not be moved, but improved in its present central situation close to the University. In order to ascertain the trend of public opinion and to give a wide publicity to the discussion, His Honour had the whole question laid before the public, and invited an expression of opinion from all officers, gentlemen, public bodies and associations interested in education and in the college. After careful consideration of the views expressed, Sir Andrew decided that the college should be kept in its present site and improved as money became available. Before proceeding further, he convened a representative conference to draw up a definite scheme of improvements. The conference agreed as to the necessity for improving the college, and determined on a scheme, which is to be gradually carried out as funds permit.

Patna College

Financial difficulties prevented His Honour from bringing into effect the improvements decided upon in the Presidency College before he left India; but he was able to initiate

the "new ideal" above referred to in the case of the Patna College, which next to the Presidency College is the most important Government college in Bengal. Here extensive improvements have been or are being made, a large area having been acquired in order to make the college more compact and to provide room for additional buildings. These will include new science laboratories, a house for the Principal, a residence for a professor, a gymnasium, a hostel for Muhammadan students, and a hostel for Hindu students to be called the Minto Hindu Hostel. The latter hostel is being erected with money subscribed by the leading Hindu noblemen of Bihar in honour of the visit of the Viceroy to Bankipore in 1905-06. Building operations are in progress, and when complete the Patna College will be the first Government Arts College in Bengal that will possess in anything like a complete form the essential features of a residential college.

Other colleges.

It remains to note the other steps taken or proposed to improve the standard of collegiate education. In the first instance may be mentioned the liberality with which His Honour has assisted private colleges to attain the standard set up by the University regulations. Generally speaking, it may be said that colleges will not be able to satisfy the requirements of those regulations unless there is one teacher to every 15 students. Private colleges have been helped to increase their staff to this degree; and it is not too much to say that without such help many of them would have collapsed or acted as a drag upon reform. The duty of Government to set its own house in order has also been borne in mind, and it is proposed to increase the staff of Government colleges to the same extent. As the scheme is under consideration by superior authorities, its details cannot be made public. It is, however, permissible to state that hitherto the Government colleges have, in many cases, produced an undesirable type of students—neither good citizens nor good scholars—and that the object of the scheme now proposed is to maintain the Government colleges in a high state of efficiency, so that they may realize the old ideal of their being models for the whole Province.

As a minor matter, it may be mentioned that schemes are in progress for the removal of the collegiate schools from the colleges, in the case of the Patna, Krishnagar and Hooghly Colleges and the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, in accordance with the recommendation made on the subject by the Universities Commission. In all these cases the provision of adequate hostel accommodation both for college and school students forms a prominent feature.

Secondary education.

The improvement of secondary schools in Bengal was also taken up by His Honour, who realized that, as the colleges are dependent for their material upon the high schools, no real progress can be made in collegiate education, unless the high schools, which feed the colleges, are in a satisfactory condition. Unfortunately this is very far from being the case. The Anglo-vernacular schools of Bengal have grown up indiscriminately without adequate direction or assistance. The majority are badly managed, staffed and equipped, and are incapable of affording a sound education. The deplorable effects of their inefficiency are only too apparent in the increasing evidence of a semi-educated class of Bengali Hindus and in the political movements supported by them in the last few years. It is well known that the chief defect in both Government and private schools of this kind is the inadequate pay and inferior qualifications of the staff. Generally speaking, only men of poor attainments adopt the profession of teaching; the few young men of good qualifications, who take up posts in high schools, merely doing so for the purpose of using them as a stepping-stone to some more remunerative career. The rates of pay offered are so low that an inferior class of Bengali Hindus is recruited, while educated Muhammadan and Bihari Hindu teachers are obtained with difficulty.

Even in the Government high schools, which are supposed to serve as a model, the teachers are under-paid, judged by the modern standard of professional remuneration, and their qualifications leave much to be desired. They are much better paid and better qualified, however, than the teachers in private schools, which constitute the vast majority of secondary educational institutions. Enquiry has shown that out of 3,054 teachers in private high schools, over 2,100 receive less than Rs. 30 and nearly 2,700 less than Rs. 50 a month. The standard of teaching and the standard of discipline are both bad. Two circumstances have hitherto prevented any serious attempt at reform. First, the squalid unaided schools, which the University allowed to grow up unchecked, and which it was nobody's business to control, have debased the tone of secondary education. Secondly, the number of inferior schools is so great that the provision of funds sufficient for their improvement has hitherto been deemed a hopeless task.

Both Sir Andrew Fraser and Sir Lancelot Hare were deeply impressed with the importance of arriving at some solution of this vital but difficult problem, as it affects the Provinces of Bengal and of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and placed the whole subject before a conference of administrative

and educational officers. On the basis of the report presented by the conference, detailed proposals have been submitted to the Government of India for the improvement of secondary education.

The question of giving teachers in secondary schools a sound training is scarcely less important. "The dictum," writes Mr. Hornell in the recent quinquennial *Review of the Progress of Education in Bengal*, "that efficient schools are not possible without efficient teachers is so universally accepted, that even to enunciate it savours of platitude, but the general inefficiency of the teachers now employed in secondary schools is attested with such unanimity, that the statement of the defect is becoming almost as much a commonplace as the general maxim quoted above. And yet the present deplorable state of affairs is surely nothing but what one would expect, the conditions of secondary education being what they are. Some institutions, it is true, exist for the training of vernacular teachers, but there is not at present a single institution in the Province for the training of English teachers."

Some years ago a scheme was prepared for establishing institutions in which teachers in secondary schools might be trained; and this scheme received the sanction of the Secretary of State shortly after Sir Andrew Fraser assumed the office of Lieutenant-Governor. Unfortunately, however, it was found impossible, owing to radical defects in the scheme, to bring it into operation. His Honour had the whole question of the training of teachers thoroughly examined, and, as a result of a conference held in Calcutta in the cold weather of 1907-08, revised proposals have been submitted for the opening of a training college in Calcutta for teachers who teach through the medium of English in secondary schools and for the establishment of two model training schools for vernacular teachers in Patna and Calcutta. In the meantime, a beginning has been made by utilizing the services of special officers in giving lectures on methods of teaching; and a small training class has been opened in Calcutta (in July 1908) for secondary school teachers who teach through the medium of English.

Primary education.

The need of training teachers in primary schools is equally great. Writing in 1902, the Director stated that the qualifications of no less than 50,000 such teachers (nearly 40,000 in Bengal as now constituted) were so meagre that "it was almost impossible to convey to the ordinary educated Englishman or European even an idea of them. To say that the majority of these men were able to read

and write, and to do a little arithmetic, was to rehearse the sum total of their accomplishments." In that year a scheme was evolved for opening in each subdivision an upper primary school designed not only for the instruction of children, but also for the training of *gurus* or primary teachers. During the two years which they spent there, the latter were expected to continue their general education and, at the same time, undergo some practical training in teaching, *i.e.*, each student spent a certain amount of time working in the school as a kind of pupil teacher. This scheme was reviewed by a special Committee convened by Government in 1905 and was condemned by it. In particular, the Committee pointed out how useless it was to pretend to train a *guru* who, concurrently with his training course, was working his own school. What this really meant was that the *guru* presented himself daily at the training school for about an hour and attempted to do in that time a full day's work. As a result of elaborate enquiries, an improved scheme has been introduced, which is in full working order and promises to be a great success.

Other important measures taken for the improvement of primary education have been (1) the revision of the Vernacular Scheme of Education of 1901, *i.e.*, of the education given in primary schools and in all classes up to Standard VI (inclusive) of middle and high schools, and (2) the revision of the text-books in use in such schools. The main defect in the scheme of 1901 was the attempt to teach science through the medium of science primers, and at the same time to prescribe those books as literature readers. The result was that the children learned neither science nor their own vernacular. The curriculum has now been revised as regards Standards I and II, and new text-books are in process of preparation, while the syllabus for Standards III to VI is under discussion. Prosaic as these details may seem, the schemes of revision are of vital importance to the efficiency of primary schools. The subject was first considered in 1904 by a Conference specially convened by the Lieutenant-Governor. The recommendations of the Conference formed the subject of a Resolution of Government published in February 1905, in which the public was invited to submit criticisms in regard to the scheme proposed. The replies received were then considered by a further Conference, appointed by His Honour, and the working out of the details of the scheme, as provisionally approved by that Conference, was referred to a special Committee, which brought its labours to a conclusion in 1906.

Something has also been done to provide better buildings for primary schools:—a most necessary reform, for Bengal has the unenviable reputation of being, in this respect, the most backward province in India. Most upper primary schools are accommodated in separate buildings, but it is only in rare cases that lower primary schools have premises of their own. No one can fail to be struck with the miserable character of the buildings in which these schools are held. The rooms are cramped and dark, ill-ventilated and cheerless. The little boys are often crowded into verandahs opening on to the village street; and, where this is the case, they are exposed to the gaze of the passers-by, the dust from the road, and the exhalations from the neighbouring drain. During the stress of the monsoon, the verandahs are often closed in so as to keep out wind and rain; and at such times they are dark and the atmosphere close and unhealthy. In order that better school houses might be provided, Government assigned 5 lakhs in 1905-06, and made a smaller grant next year, for the construction of suitable buildings, on condition that a reasonable proportion of the total cost was contributed from local sources. Owing, however, to lack of funds and want of local interest, not so much progress has been made as could be desired.

Muhammadan education.

The important problem of Muhammadan education also received sympathetic consideration from Sir Andrew Fraser. The first step taken to improve the standard of efficiency was in 1905, when Government introduced a scheme of giving grants-in-aid to *maktabs*, *i.e.*, Muhammadan indigenous primary schools, on condition that they conformed to simple departmental standards. It was felt, however, that the whole system of Muhammadan education in Bengal and the system of recruiting Muhammadans for the Government services required careful examination. Sir Andrew Fraser accordingly authorized the summoning of a representative Conference of Muhammadan gentlemen in the cold weather of 1907-08, and recommendations based on the resolutions of the Conference have recently been submitted. The proposals put forward constitute a complement to the scheme for the improvement of secondary education in Bengal, to which reference has already been made; they provide for a large extension of the system of giving grants-in-aid to *maktabs*; and they provide for the institution of a title examination for proficiency in the highest branches of Arabic learning at the Calcutta Madrasa.

The question of diffusing education more widely among Muhammadan women and girls has also been taken up

This is a problem even more difficult, for though there are over three quarters of a million Muhammadan girls of school-going age, less than 10,000 attend school and only about 5,000 study in girls' schools. There are practically no special schools for them and but little zanana education. The difficulty is how to find a means of attracting the girls to school and of inducing zanana women to accept instruction. A Conference of leading Muhammadans was therefore convened in 1907 in order to consider what could be done to promote education among this class; and a syllabus prepared by them has been adopted for use both in special schools for Muhammadan girls and in zanana instruction. It is hoped that its introduction will lead to the opening of more such special schools and also encourage education in Muhammadan zananas.

Education of special classes.

The two most important schemes for the education of special classes introduced during the quinquennium were the amalgamation of the reformatory schools at Alipore and Hazaribagh and a scheme for extending primary education among the tea-plantation labourers in the Darjeeling hills. The transfer of the Alipore reformatory had become an urgent need, as the nature of the buildings and want of space precluded its development on modern lines, *i.e*, by treating the boys as if they were at school and not as if they were in jail. It was proposed at first to combine the two schools at Hazaribagh, where there is ample accommodation. The buildings there are not, however, considered suitable for the permanent location of the school, and a new site will be selected and new buildings constructed on modern lines as soon as practicable.

As regards the tea-garden population, there were no systematic arrangements for the instruction of labourers' children. The managers of tea estates feared that English might be taught in the schools, and in consequence the labourers might become over-educated. A Conference of officials and representatives of the planting community was held in Darjeeling in 1906, and it was explained that nothing but primary education was contemplated. The policy agreed upon at this Conference was that Government should give liberal grants-in-aid, and that the tea-garden managers on the other hand should be invited to provide the sites and school buildings, and keep the latter in repair. A scheme based on these lines is now in operation and has been taken advantage of by the planters, the majority of whom seem to be alive to their responsibilities regarding the education of the children of their labourers.

A third special class consists of the noblemen and zamindars of the Province. As regards this class one of the objects of the Ranchi College is to secure for the sons of nobles and zamindars, by means of special hostels, a home life suitable to their position and at the same time to give them the benefit of the common life of a vigorous college.

Female education.

Hitherto the chief cause operating to hinder progress in the education of Indian women and girls in Bengal has been the want of qualified female teachers and inspecting agents. For want of such a staff it has not been possible to organize the kind of schools or the type of education the people require. Government has sanctioned schemes for peripatetic teaching by lady teachers, and another scheme by which such teachers instruct girls in towns and villages at central places. Not only, however, are properly qualified teachers not available, but it is impossible to obtain the services of ladies with even passable qualifications except at a cost incommensurate with their value. Good work has, it is true, been done by Christian mission training schools, but they provide only for Christian girls' schools. The existing aided classes for training Muhammadan, Hindu and Brahmo girls are not capable of turning out teachers competent to impart a good primary education to girls, while no attempt has been made to train teachers qualified to teach in secondary schools.

Representations on the inadequacy of the existing arrangements were made to His Honour in different parts of the Province. It was apparent that much interest was taken in the subject, especially in Bihar, and that there was a strong feeling that a forward movement should be made. Sir Andrew therefore appointed a representative Committee to consider the whole question; and in accordance with their recommendations, schemes have been prepared for the establishment of training colleges for women teachers, the main object of which is to train vernacular teachers for female primary schools. It is proposed to open one such school at Bankipore for the Hindi-speaking part of Bengal and another at Calcutta for the Bengali community. The former scheme has met with the general approval of the Government of India, and the latter is under consideration.

There is a strong feeling among intelligent representatives of the Indian community that in the expansion of female education the *pardah* system should be kept steadily in view:—that zanana education should be advanced, if not instead of, at least as complementary to, the education of girls in schools. Apart from the fact that there are many girls

whose parents and guardians do not like them to attend a school at all, the greater number of those who do so have to leave when very young; and, in the homes to which they go, there is so little encouragement to keep up their studies, that, unless some effort is made to reach them in their homes, their education is not likely to survive very long. Consequently, the education of Indian women cannot proceed far while it is confined to education in schools. A zanana education is, therefore, necessary both to assist girls who have been at school in keeping up their studies, and prevent them from falling back into ignorance, and also to teach married girls or young women who have not been to school at all.

To meet this want, a system was introduced in 1902 by which a certain number of Hindu and Muhammadan women give instruction to zanana women and girls by house-to-house visitation. In 1903 that modest scheme was supplemented by another, the main feature of which is that such females are collected together in selected houses belonging to respectable persons and there receive instruction. During His Honour's administration a further advance was made by providing *atus* or Muhammadan lady teachers for Bihar, the scheme including the appointment of a lady superintendent to train them and supervise their work. For the further development and organization of an efficient system of zanana education, a supply of qualified female teachers is necessary; but meanwhile, in order to pave the way, Government has sanctioned a suitable syllabus of instruction and a list of text-books, for the guidance of teachers in Muhammadan schools and zananas, which were drawn up by a conference of Muhammadan gentlemen convened in 1907. Sanction has also been given to a system of scholarships tenable at Islamic girls' schools, and liberal grants have been made to enable those institutions to offer teachers salaries which educated Muhammadan women will accept. The difficulty is still, however, not merely to obtain trained teachers, but teachers of suitable character, position and qualifications, who will command respect and by their capabilities justify the education they themselves have received.

Every opportunity has also been taken to give liberal assistance to Indian girls' schools, wherever it appeared that there was any chance of successful work being done. For instance, a monthly grant has been given to the *Mohila Shilpa Samiti*, or Ladies' Industrial League, a society of Indian ladies in Calcutta which aims at training women of the middle and upper classes of Bengali society, especially

Hindu widows, to do industrial work. Aid has been given to a wool-dyeing and weaving school established at Kalimpong for hill women. The Brahmo Girls' High School in Calcutta was remodelled in 1906, and a complete staff of female teachers appointed, with the help of an annual grant from Government. A clearer idea, however, of the extent to which financial assistance has been given may be gathered from the fact that during the quinquennium ending in 1908 the direct expenditure of Government on girls' schools increased by Rs. 1,12,900 or by 60 per cent.

Among other measures taken to improve female education may be mentioned the increase of the inspecting agency. Until 1904 an Inspectress of Schools represented the whole inspecting staff of Bengal. With the rapid increase of girls' schools which has taken place in recent years, the inadequacy of the inspecting agency became accentuated; and many schools and much zanana teaching work remained uninspected. To remedy this state of affairs, the staff has been largely increased, and there are now two Inspectresses and six Assistant Inspectresses.

Professional and technical education.

The premier technical and industrial institution in the Province is the Civil Engineering College at Sibpur. It has long suffered, however, from several disadvantages, the chief of which is its unhealthiness both for students and professors, whether European or Indian. The unhealthiness of the climate of Sibpur is notorious; and many parents hesitate to send their sons to the college on that account. The majority of the students come from the deltaic tracts of Bengal, while many young men who reside in the healthier parts of the Province, as well as European and Eurasian lads, are deterred from seeking admission. Those who do go suffer in health, often leaving with their constitutions undermined; and the prevalence of sickness among professors and instructors is detrimental to efficiency. Apart from that, the climate is too enervating either for satisfactory study or for vigorous and energetic work in the workshops and laboratories, round which the scheme of education revolves. Other disadvantages of the site are its proximity to Calcutta, which affects the morals and discipline of the students, the character of the surrounding country, which has no geologieal interest and is too congested to be suitable for the teaching of surveying, and the inadequacy of the buildings.

These considerations led Sir Andrew Fraser to advocate the removal of the college from Sibpur. At his first visit to the college in March 1904 he announced that its removal to a healthier site would be necessary; and, after much

discussion, the proposal has received the provisional sanction of the Government of India. The site to which it is to be removed is Ranchi, which enjoys an ideal climate for the practical education given in the college. The college will not only be in a healthy locality, but, now that the railway has been constructed, in a locality easily accessible from the mining tracts, where there is ample room for a college built and equipped on modern lines. Sir Lancelot Hare, Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam, strongly supported the removal of this College from Sibpur and its establishment at Ranchi.

Pending the removal of the college, its expansion has been checked and its work hampered by want of adequate accommodation. But there has been one development of considerable importance, viz., the opening of classes for students who intend to take up mining as a profession, and the introduction of a system of practical instruction for persons actually engaged in the industry, lectures being given at different centres in the mining tracts by a professor. A certain number of students are also sent every year to the Birmingham University to go through a course of mining instruction. A measure of less importance but of some practical value has been the introduction of a class for training motor driver mechanics at the college.

The only other subject which need be mentioned under the head of professional education is the introduction of a new scheme of commercial education. Commercial classes had, it is true, been opened at the Presidency College in 1903, but they were not a success. Complaints were frequent that there was no proper provision for training young men in business ways. Applicants for posts in offices had University degrees, but had not received even an elementary commercial training. They knew nothing about the work of a business establishment, and were of little use until a long time after they had been in an office. Sir Andrew Fraser's attention was drawn to these complaints, and, after consulting the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and several gentlemen interested in commercial education, he decided to refer the subject to the consideration of a Committee of practical men, on which the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and the Calcutta Trades Association were represented. The Committee devised a greatly improved scheme, which was approved by the Lieutenant-Governor and introduced in July 1905.

The principal measures taken for the development of industrial education during the quinquennium were as follows. A

careful examination of the relative importance of the various industries was made, a definite scheme was formulated for the improvement of the leading cottage industry (weaving), and, in connection with higher technical education, a scheme for teaching industrial chemistry was prepared in consultation with a representative body of educated Indians. In 1904 His Honour convened a Conference, consisting of representatives of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, and the Indian Industrial Association, in addition to selected Government officers, to consider the whole question of the development of industrial education, and in particular what industries and manufactures should be selected for special attention. The Committee recommended that attention should be confined to silk, wool and cotton weaving, and that a school should be established at Serampore, at which practical instruction should be given in the best and latest methods of weaving. His Honour accepted their recommendation, and a scheme was prepared, of which the main objects were (1) to bring home to the ordinary artisans the latest improvements in weaving apparatus, and, after instructing them in their use, to give them advances of money in order to enable them to purchase the necessary appliances; and (2) to train up higher class students with the object of enabling them to become teachers of improved methods in outlying centres or to start business on their own account. The scheme was submitted to the Government of India, and the sanction of the Secretary of State to the appointment of a Principal and Assistant Principal for the school was given in 1907.

While this matter was pending, the question of the improvement of technical education was again examined by a Committee appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in 1906 to consider a scheme for the establishment of a Technical College. This question was raised by the Association for the Advancement of Scientific and Industrial Education of Indians, which recommended the establishment of classes in a number of different subjects. As a result of the Committee's recommendations, proposals have been made that classes in technological chemistry and in dyeing and the chemistry of dyeing should be opened at the Sibpur College, that instruction should be given in the scientific principles underlying the chief industries of the country, and that facilities should be afforded for research work. This matter is still under discussion.

A special enquiry into the question of curing and tanning leather was held in 1907; and at the close of that year a most important enquiry into the industries of

the Province was made by Mr. J. G. Cumming, I.C.S., who was deputed to bring up to date the industrial survey of Bengal made by Mr. Collin in 1890, and to report what can be done for the development of its most important industries. The result of the latter enquiry has been a comprehensive and most valuable review of the present condition and future prospects of the industries of Bengal. Proposals have also been submitted for the appointment of a Superintendent of Industries and Inspector of Technical and Industrial Institutions, in order that there may be a more effective agency for the direction and supervision of this important branch of education.

A fuller account of the measures taken for the development of technical and industrial education will be found in Mr. Cumming's recent report on *Technical and Industrial Instruction in Bengal.*

Physical and moral training.

In no branch of educational work did Sir Andrew Fraser take more interest, and in no branch was reform perhaps more necessary, than in the provision, by means of properly controlled hostels and messes, of suitable accommodation for college students who do not reside with parents or guardians. For some years before His Honour became Lieutenant-Governor, there had been a considerable extension of the system of hostels. In Calcutta a number of new hostels had been established, such as the Eden Hindu Hostel and the Elliott Hostel, and in the mofussil Government had given subsidies to such institutions. Private persons, however, as a rule, did not come forward to establish or endow them; and the number of hostels was far too small to accommodate all the students who should be under supervision and control. As regards students' messes, a Conference held in Calcutta in 1900 drew up rules for their regulation, which the heads of colleges undertook to enforce. These rules were published in September 1900, but later enquiries showed that they were not observed and that the interest in keeping them in operation had died out. One reason for this was that the heads of colleges had allowed a large number of students from other colleges to join one mess, and it was impossible to maintain proper control over a heterogenous mass of students belonging to many different colleges. To check this, the rules were revised so as to make it obligatory for all the members of a mess to belong to the same college.

In his first year of office Sir Andrew's attention was drawn to the way in which the rules had become practically a dead letter in Calcutta. An enquiry was held in 1904 by the Assistant Director of Public Instruction and disclosed an unsatisfactory state of affairs. "It is plain," wrote

the Assistant Director, "that, in the life of these students outside the college lecture-room, there is no semblance whatever of order, discipline or authority; and the amount of evil for which this state of things is responsible would, I am afraid, be difficult to exaggerate. Apart from the feebleness of character, slovenliness and incompetence which shows itself in their college work and is the natural outcome of a slipshod and wholly undisciplined mode of life, there are positive moral evils of a more serious nature. Some of the messes are almost next door to brothels; and I have been told by a trustworthy person of instances where students for the sake of economy have actually lived in brothels. The servants employed in the messes, I am told, are commonly women of loose character. That evil of this kind is deplorably prevalent among Calcutta students cannot, I am afraid, be doubted; and its physical consequences are most serious." Enquiry in the mofussil showed almost as bad a state of affairs, brothels being found close to colleges, schools and hostels in many stations. The sanitary condition of such hostels and messes may be gathered from the remarks of the Director of Public Instruction. "It is scarcely conceivable that parents can know of the squalid dens in which their sons reside; and, whether they know or not, a very large measure of responsibility in this matter rests on the authorities conducting schools. The fact cannot be blinked that infinitely more harm may be done to boys in these so-called messes, than good can be done to them in the colleges or schools."

Some important measures of reform have now been introduced. As regards the vicious influences to which students were frequently exposed, a reference to the section on Social Measures will show that two Acts have been passed, one for the mofussil and the other for Calcutta, empowering the authorities to close brothels in the neighbourhood of educational institutions. For the further improvement of the residence of students in Calcutta it was decided, after the question had been considered by a Conference of the heads of educational institutions in that city, that Government itself should step in and take upon itself the responsibility of finding mess accommodation for college students, who are not certified by the Principals of their colleges to be living either with their parents or recognized guardians. According to this scheme, each college has its own mess or messes, *i.e.*, students from different colleges are not allowed to congregate together where they please, but are told off to messes which are supervised by the Principals of

their colleges. The messes, moreover, are under the control of Superintendents, the officers selected being professors of colleges, teachers, graduates, or other qualified persons approved by the Principals.

A similar scheme was initiated in 1905-06 for the more important colleges in the mofussil; and the construction of good hostels in connection with Government colleges forms a prominent feature in all projects for their improvement. The necessity of providing in this way for the students in the mofussil may be gathered from the preceding account and also from the experience gained when Government introduced the Calcutta scheme. For, when it became known that in future students in that city would have to lead regular lives in hostels and messes, more than half the students shrunk from the mild discipline that this system involved and betook themselves to insanitary houses in the mofussil, where they could live without control.

From the above account it will be seen that the working out of a scheme of residence for college students—a matter which primarily concerns the University—devolved upon the Education Department owing to the inability of the University to deal with the matter; but in 1907, with the consent of that body, Government handed over to the University the control of the students' messes in Calcutta, made an annual grant to ensure the success of the scheme, and lent the services of an educational officer to act as Inspector of Hostels.

European education.

The most important work done during the quinquennium in connection with European education consisted of the revision of the Code of Regulations for European schools, an appropriate classification of European schools, and the preparation of a suitable curriculum. In 1902 the revision of the Code was entrusted to a Committee consisting of all the Inspectors of European Schools in India; and next year a Committee of Directors of Public Instruction, which had been appointed to enquire into the financial condition of hill schools, gave a sketch of what they considered the ordinary curriculum of an European hill school should be, and criticized the system which the Code enjoined. In 1905 the Government of India brought out a revised uniform Code for general adoption, but stated that they were not satisfied with the curriculum prescribed, and asked that it might be examined in the light of the views expressed by the last Committee. The question was one of importance, for a good curriculum is the mainspring of such a Code, many of the rules in which depend on the character of the curriculum it establishes. For its satisfactory solution a

Conference of persons connected with or interested in the education of Europeans was convened in 1906; and the recommended that European schools should be classified in two grades, secondary and elementary, and suggested a course of studies for each grade. Proposals to this effect were submitted to and sanctioned by the Government of India; and as they involved considerable modifications of the Code, a revised Code has been prepared—a matter of no little importance to European schools, for on it their educational welfare largely depends.

For the further improvement of European education a supply of qualified and well-trained teachers is necessary. The existing arrangements for training female teachers are inadequate, and a good training college is an urgent want. It is accordingly proposed to establish a thoroughly well-organized training college for such teachers with an independent staff. For the training of male teachers it has been decided to open a class in connection with the Lawrence Military Asylum, Sanawar. For the rest, a large measure of increased assistance has been given to European schools, the grants-in-aid increasing from 1¼ lakhs to 3¼ lakhs in the quinquennium ending in 1906-07. In particular, material help has been given to La Martiniére College, Calcutta, to the Goethal's Memorial Orphanage, Kurseong, to St. Paul's School, Darjeeling and to the Diocesan Girls' School, Darjeeling, the two schools last named being, practically speaking, saved from collapse by Government. Further, a new scheme of management for St Paul's School, Darjeeling, was introduced in 1908, provision for its endowment and maintenance being made under the Charitable Endowments Act of 1890. Liberal assistance has also been given to the St. Andrew's Colonial Homes at Kalimpong, which are intended for the education and training of poor European and Eurasian children in a healthy climate and in favourable environments.

Last, but not least, among the steps taken in the interests of European education may be mentioned a scheme inaugurated by His Honour for facilitating the employment in Government service of European and Eurasian boys of the better classes educated in this country. As is well-known, some services in which they formerly obtained employment have become more or less closed to them of late years. Complaints on this account have been many and bitter; and Sir Andrew recognized their force. A conference was accordingly held, at which the Director-General of Education, the Secretary to Government in the General Department, the Director of Public Instruction, and the Rectors of the two principal

European hill schools were present; and the heads of all the principal Departments were consulted. It was not found possible to frame one special system of recruitment for all Departments; but lines were finally laid down by most of the Departments which will be of great advantage both to the schools and to the public service. It has been decided that in future the Collector of Customs shall always intimate the vacancies that exist and the fact that he is willing to consider applications for the appointments. The Excise Commissioner and the Port Trust authorities in Calcutta will also in future make appointments solely by reference to the Director of Public Instruction, who will call for nominations from the managers of European schools through the Inspectors of European schools. Then the schools, on receiving such intimation, will be able to nominate their best boys. In making these arrangements His Honour did all that was at the time possible in the way of securing appointments for boys of the European schools of the Province. The Government, it may be added, is endeavouring to follow a similar policy in regard to the services to which appointments are made in the Secretariat.

Controlling agencies.

The most important administrative changes affecting the cadre of the service during the quinquennium were the reorganization of the Provincial Educational Service and of the Subordinate Educational Service, and the constitution of the Lower Subordinate Eudcational Service. The pay and prospects of educational officers have been considerably improved by these measures; and the inspecting staff has also been largely increased in order to enable the Department to cope with the growing burden of work. Details of these changes will be found in the departmental reports, and it need only be stated that the schemes, which had been initiated before Sir Andrew Fraser became Lieutenant-Governor, were matured and carried through during his administration.

Another change which was carried through on the initiative of Sir Andrew was the transfer of Sub-Inspectors of Schools from the service of District Boards to the direct control of the Education Department. It may be explained that on the formation of District Boards under the Local Self-Government Act of 1885, the control of Government middle and primary schools was vested in those bodies; and for their supervision the services of Sub-Inspectors were placed at the disposal of the District Boards, together with a Government grant sufficient to meet their pay and travelling allowances. The Educational Conference held at Simla in 1901 suggested that, where primary schools were maintained

by District Boards, they should, as far as possible, be under the financial and general supervision of the Education Department. The Government of India, accepting their suggestion, recommended the adoption, as far as possible, of the Bombay system, under which almost the entire control of primary education is in the hands of the Education Department. Subsequently, in 1904, they explained that it was essential that Government, in withdrawing from direct management of schools, should retain a general control by means of efficient inspection. Local bodies might, no doubt, well be entrusted with the direct management of schools; but the State ought, on the one hand, to set up a standard of its own, and on the other, to ascertain through inspection how far that standard was being attained.

Such a responsibility could, Sir Andrew felt, only be discharged if the State employed and depended upon officers of its own; and this involved giving up the system of having the Sub-Inspectors under the District Boards, an arrangement which not only differed from that adopted elsewhere in India, but was also at variance with that in vogue in England. Accordingly, after most careful consideration of the question, and after consulting all Commissioners of Divisions and the principal educational officers in the Province, His Honour came to the conclusion that the transfer of the inspecting agency to the Education Department was unavoidable in the interests of primary education and of the officers themselves. This measure was carried out in 1906.

It is undesirable to stir the dregs of old controversies, but a brief reference may be made to the appointment by His Honour of a member of the Indian Civil Service to be Director of Public Instruction, an appointment which aroused much hostile criticism. On this point it need merely be said that it was a recognized principle that the right rests with the Government, after full consideration of all the circumstances of the case, to appoint as the head of any department the man whose appointment will be most in the interests of the public service. It had also been distinctly laid down that while, it is desirable, other things being equal, to appoint an educational officer to be Director of Public Instruction, the Education Department has no right to claim the appointment. It appeared to Sir Andrew that there was at the time no member of that Department whom he could appoint with confidence that he would be able to carry out the work of reorganization known to be urgently necessary. He accordingly appointed Mr. A. Earle, I.C.S., late a Secretary to Government, who, by his training, experience and administrative capacity,

possessed the necessary qualifications. The appointment was due to special circumstances; it was only a temporary one; and it was justified by its success.

Co-operation of Executive officers.

In the course of his tours through the Province Sir Andrew Fraser was impressed with the want of co-operation between officers of the Education Department and the officers entrusted with the administration of divisions and districts. This state of affairs was unsatisfactory in itself, and was also opposed to the long standing policy of Government and its orders on the subject. When systematic measures for the development of primary and other education were taken by Sir George Campbell in 1872, the executive officers of Government were practically placed in responsible charge of the education of the whole Province. This arrangement continued till 1877, when questions relating to education, whether primary or secondary, had, under the orders of Government, to be considered both by the executive and educational authorities, and almost all questions had finally to be referred to the Commissioner, or to pass through him to the Director of Public Instruction. This system was found to be too cumbrous; and in 1878 Sir Ashley Eden revised the organization of the Education Department, so as to ensure a better distribution of the duties of supervision and to define more precisely the powers exercised by Magistrates and Commissioners. It is unnecessary to give details of this scheme; and it will suffice to say that it was definitely laid down that the responsibility of fostering and superintending primary education in each district was to rest with the local executive officer, *i.e.*, with the Magistrate and Collector. As regards secondary education, it was recognized that, while the direct control and management of secondary schools must necessarily remain in the hands of the departmental officers, the District Officers could give substantial help. The latter were accordingly authorized to inspect schools of all classes as *ex-officio* visitors, and to make suggestions to educational officers. When the Local Self-Government Act was passed in 1885, the responsibility for primary education was committed directly to the District Board and its Chairman. But this did not really alter the position of the District Magistrate, both because he is responsible for seeing that the District Board does its work properly, and also because the Magistrate is invariably the Chairman of the District Board and its executive authority. Subsequently, in 1894, the principles laid down in 1878 were reaffirmed by Government.

Sir Andrew Fraser found that these orders had been generally lost sight of, and in too many cases had almost

become a dead letter. Officers who were or had been Commissioners informed him, one after another, that Inspectors of Schools seldom, if ever, asked for the help and advice of the Commissioner, or referred to him at all except when they wanted money; that the Commissioners were not informed of the measures taken by the Education Department; that even when a Commissioner recorded an inspection note, he did not hear of the result of his suggestions; and that while the Commissioner had much to do with education in Tributary States, he had no voice in educational matters in British territory. District Officers, with whom His Honour discussed the matter, made similar complaints. But while many of them regretted that they were kept entirely apart from the educational interests of their divisions and districts, none of them seemed to know that the standing orders gave them authority to take their part in educational work. To Sir Andrew, convinced of the value of the influence of Magistrates and other executive officers in fostering and developing primary education in their districts, it seemed lamentable that this influence should have been so little exercised of late years. He accordingly addressed all Commissioners of Divisions and District Officers requesting them to visit colleges and high schools more frequently, to enter more fully into consultation with head-masters and Inspectors regarding the advancement of education, to offer suggestions for improvements in the accommodation provided for students and teachers and in the moral and sanitary aspects of their surroundings, to encourage sports, to be present at the distribution of prizes, and in similar ways to evince a deeper personal interest in the matter of education. At the same time, though the matter was one more directly concerning executive officers, he made it clear that he would welcome the establishment of similar kindly relations between District Judges and the Education Department. Both executive and educational officers were also reminded of the standing orders of Government and were directed to co-operate heartily with one another.

The respective duties of the educational and civil officers were clearly defined, viz., (1) the Magistrates and Collectors and other executive officers in their districts, and Commissioners in their Divisions, are charged with the responsibility of fostering and developing primary education, and of seeing that a sufficient proportion of funds is devoted to this purpose; (2) the educational officers, on the other hand, are charged with the duty of helping them, and of consulting them, in all efforts made to improve primary education, while

they are responsible for the educational standards, the teaching and the expert inspection of such schools.

These orders were at the time much misrepresented, and it was alleged that they aimed at placing the whole control of education in the hands of the District Magistrate. But educational officers were merely urged to take advantage of the local knowledge and influence of executive officers and also of judicial officers, so as to push forward the cause of education. In no way were the officers of the Educational Department subordinated to the executive officers, though they were certainly urged to go to them for advice and help. The purely educational work was left entirely in the hands of the educational officers; but they were called upon to take advantage of the local knowledge and experience of the District Officers in deciding on the educational claims or necessities of different localities, and also to take advantage of the influence of the same officers in seeking to make the cause more popular.

These orders, moreover, did not mark a new policy, for Government had emphasized over and over again the concern of the Magistrate with education as the officer in charge of the district, viz., that he is bound to do all that he can for the cause of education, and specially bound to see to the efficiency of primary education. These orders, however, were being neglected, and there was a widening breach between him and the educational officers. It fell to Sir Andrew Fraser to detect this state of affairs. His object briefly was to bring the officers of two important branches of administration into closer touch, to secure not only the absence of friction, but a real co-operation, and thus strengthen the hands of the Education Department in their efforts to develop a sound and efficient system of primary education. This object is already being realized; and recent reports are eloquent as to the happy results obtained.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Amendment of Local Self-Government Act.

In any account of the history of local self-government during the quinquennium first place must be given to the amendment in 1908 of the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885. The Bill which was then passed into law was the result of the deliberations of over 12 years. Originally, a Bill with a few clauses framed merely for the purpose of enabling District Boards to contribute towards measures of veterinary relief, it developed into a long Bill containing

many provisions of far-reaching importance and dealing with almost every portion of the Act.

In 1896 a Bill had been introduced with provisions enabling District Boards to devote some portion of their funds to the establishment and maintenance of veterinary dispensaries, the improvement of the breed of horses and cattle, the prevention and cure of horse and cattle diseases, and also empowering District Boards to spend money on the training and employment of medical practitioners and the promotion of free vaccination. The Bill, however, was not proceeded with, in consideration, among other reasons, of the famine and scarcity of 1896-97, and the possibility, which was then being considered, of the separation of Local from Provincial finance. The question of amending the Act was again taken up in 1901, in connection with a proposal to authorize the levy of tolls on new bridges, until the initial cost and capitalized value of the cost of maintenance or renewal had been recovered. In 1902, a fresh draft Bill was prepared, incorporating provisions with this object, and including the provisions in the Bill introduced in 1896, as well as others. This Bill was again revised and expanded in accordance with certain suggestions made by the Government of India; and a fresh Bill was introduced in 1904. Owing to the large number of additional amendments subsequently found necessary, it was decided not to proceed further with this Bill, and it was accordingly withdrawn.

In 1905 another Bill was prepared, containing a number of further provisions, of which the most important were:—(1) to prohibit the diversion of the road cess to purposes other than those enumerated in section 109 of the Cess Act; (2) to authorize the imposition of a cess for the purpose of guaranteeing interest on money borrowed for the construction of railways; (3) to delegate formally to Commissioners of Divisions certain powers which practically, though not nominally, were already exercised by them; (4) to improve the position of Union Committees; and (5) to legalize expenditure from the District Fund on minor works of irrigation. After further correspondence with the Government of India, certain modifications were made in the Bill. The provisions in regard to ear-marking the road cess were omitted, and a new Bill was drawn up and introduced in 1906. The Bill was referred to a Select Committee, which recommended that, in view of the very decided opposition to the provisions empowering the Boards to impose a cess to meet payments due in respect of a railway or tramway, those clauses should be omitted. They were accordingly excluded from the Bill.

After the Select Committee had presented their report, Sir Andrew Fraser decided to postpone the consideration of the Bill. There were two principal reasons which led to this decision. In the first place, it appeared to be the unanimous opinion of the non-official Members of Council that the road cess should be devoted to the objects for which it is collected; and with this view the Lieutenant-Governor entirely agreed: Secondly, strong representations were made that the Bill should include provisions giving fuller powers to local bodies with regard to sanitation. Amendments were consequently drafted—(1) ear-marking the road cess for the objects for which it is collected, and (2) giving local Union Committees certain powers in respect of measures of sanitation, conservancy, drainage and water-supply, subject in certain cases to the control of the District Board and the Commissioner, and empowering them to supplement the funds available for such local improvements by permissive local taxation. The insertion of such provisions having been sanctioned by the Government of India, the Bill was recommitted to the Select Committee in July 1908, and was passed in September 1908 as the Bengal Local Self-Government (Amendment) Act, 1908. The new provisions contained in the Act call for some explanation.

When the District Boards were formed in 1887, they inherited from their predecessors—the District Road Cess Committees—the work and the revenue of those bodies, the principal source of income being the road cess. At the same time, to enable them to meet the new duties which were imposed upon them, the entire receipts under the Cattle Trespass Act and the income from certain ferries were transferred to them from the Provincial account, any excess of expenditure over income being made good by a fixed grant from Government. It was believed that the revenue from pounds and ferries was susceptible of considerable improvement, and that, from the expansion of income under those heads, the Boards would be able to provide for the medical and educational needs of their districts and for other local requirements. These anticipations were only partially fulfilled, for though in some cases the gain from ferries has been substantial, the increase under pounds has been trifling; and in any case the receipts from other sources were comparatively small. The road cess, it is true, showed some expansion, but this was far from sufficient to meet the growing demand for improved communications, and especially for feeder roads.

Consequently, many of the District Boards were compelled by the inelasticity of their general income to maintain

their educational and medical institutions partly from their receipts on account of road cess. Such expenditure was not illegal, for by the Local Self-Government Act of 1885 the road cess was merged in the District Fund, and since that date could legally be spent on any of the objects to which the District Fund may be devoted. The Bengal Government, however, has always been opposed to such diversion; and it was laid down by Sir Alexander Mackenzie in 1896 that, on the ground of expediency and quite apart from any legal obligation, it was desirable, as a general rule, that an amount approximately equivalent to the proceeds of the road cess should be devoted to the objects which the Legislature had in view when Bengal Act IX of 1880 was passed. The District Boards found it impossible to give full effect to these instructions; and in 1901 Sir John Woodburn's Government, in order to redress the balance, made a grant of five lakhs, which was renewed in the two subsequent years, for the improvement of communications. Subsequently, the Government of India made a special assignment for the purpose of placing the finances of the Boards on a proper footing.

The state of affairs when the Bill to amend the Local Self-Government Act was introduced, was briefly as follows. The inelasticity of the general income of the District Boards and circumstances beyond the control of the Government had prevented the latter from giving full effect to its policy, which was entirely opposed to the diversion of the road cess. The result was that for many years past the Government had been charged by many sections of the public with breach of faith in not fulfilling the pledge given by a former Lieutenant-Governor. The introduction of the Bill into Council without any provisions for ear-marking the road cess caused the re-asseveration of the charge of breach of faith; and non-official Members of Council begged earnestly that such provisions might be added to the Bill. Sir Andrew Fraser could not fail to take notice of this general unanimity of public opinion. He accordingly announced in Council that he would postpone the consideration of the Bill; and, in so doing, sought to give a public assurance through the Legislature that the policy openly and repeatedly affirmed by the Government was a real and earnest policy, and at the same time to remove once for all the cause of, or it might be, in some cases, the excuse for, agitation against the Government.

Its financial policy in recent years had shown the groundlessness of the charge of breach of faith brought against it;

but Sir Andrew desired to take the opportunity to place clearly on record a proof of its earnestness in this matter, and to set at rest the persistent agitation, from which nothing but evil resulted. Apart, moreover, from this general aspect, it seemed to His Honour to be beyond doubt that, to meet present and future requirements, so far as they could be foreseen, no sum short of the proceeds of the road cess would be in any way adequate to the needs of the Province in the way of communications. Internal communications in the districts were, it was generally admitted, bad; the state of affairs that had been tolerated in the past could not be allowed to continue much longer; and the time had come when an earnest and sustained effort must be made to remove this blot on the administration. The representations of the Lieutenant-Governor were accepted by the Government of India, which sanctioned the earmarking of the road cess solely for the extension and maintenance of communications and the prohibition of its diversion to other purposes, subject to the proviso that power to condone any temporary or accidental deviation from the rule should be expressly reserved to Government.

The second important addition to the Act consists of the provisions relating to sanitation. The old Municipal Act (V of 1876), it may be explained, provided for four different stages of urban growth, viz., first and second class municipalities, unions and stations. There was an elaborate law for the larger municipalities and a less elaborate one for the smaller; while still simpler arrangements were provided for petty townships, which were described, respectively, as unions and stations. When the present Municipal Act was passed in 1884, these distinctions were swept away, and only one kind of municipality was provided for. The smaller places which had previously been classed as unions and stations were left out of account. It was proposed to provide for these in the Local Self-Government Act, which was passed into law a year later. That Act provided for three bodies, viz., the Union Committee, the Local Board, and the District Board. It was contemplated that the whole of the area of a subdivision (*i.e.*, the area of the Local Board) should be divided off into unions, and that each union should be administered by a local Committee appointed for the purpose. Experience, however, proved that the provisions regarding unions were unworkable. No proper scheme of taxation was provided, nor was there any adequate control. These unions, therefore, failed to take the place of the municipal unions and stations dealt with in the old Municipal Act of 1876.

A notable instance of this defect in the law regulating local self-government came to Sir Andrew Fraser's notice when he became Lieutenant-Governor, viz., the way in which crowded bazars were springing up at railway centres and elsewhere without any kind of control. No attempt was made to lay out roads and apportion sites, or to make any provision for the sanitary requirements of the people, the reason being that there was no law under which control over these places could be exercised. After carefully considering the question whether the requirements of railway bazars and other townlets in the mofussil should be dealt with by means of a special Act similar to the Village Sanitation Act of the Central Provinces or whether the provisions regarding unions in the Local Self-Government Act should be amended so as to create the necessary legal machinery, it was decided to adopt the latter course.

Under the new Act power is given, *inter alia*, to a Union Committee to undertake works of sanitation *suo motu*, subject to the control of the District Board and of rules made by the Lieutenant-Governor; to deal with insanitary villages, or insanitary blocks in villages, in accordance with a scheme to be approved by the District Board and the Commissioner; to employ special establishments for the cleansing of villages and to require occupiers of houses to cleanse their holdings; to control the construction of new buildings; and to supplement their income by levying light taxation from the owners or occupiers of property within the union. Appeals to the District Magistrate and the Commissioner of the Division have also been provided for as a safeguard.

Omitting the numerous provisions inserted with the object of removing defects and supplying omissions which many years' experience of the working of the Local Self-Government Act has brought to light, the more important provisions of the new Act (1) legalize the expenditure of District Board Funds on the establishment and maintenance of veterinary dispensaries, the entertainment of Veterinary Assistants, and the improvement of the breed of cattle and horses; (2) permit District Boards to contribute towards the training and employment of medical practitioners, and the promoting of free vaccination; (3) authorize the levy of tolls on newly constructed bridges; (4) formally delegate to Commissioners powers which they practically, though not nominally, exercised already; (5) enable District Boards to spend money on tanks and wells which are not the property or under the control of the Board, and, in the case of famine or scarcity, on minor works of irrigation; (6) permit District Boards to contribute

towards the construction and maintenance of hostels attached to private educational institutions of all kinds, and to constitute Education Committees, and also enable Government to transfer funds to District Boards for this purpose; (7) legalize the expenditure of the District Fund on the construction of residences for District Engineers, and the payment of advances to members of their establishment for the acquisition or construction of residences; (8) make it obligatory for every District Board to form a Sanitation Committee and appoint a Sanitary Inspector; (9) give to Union Committees certain important powers in respect of local sanitation, drainage and water-supply; and (10) prevent the diversion of the road cess to purposes other than those enumerated in the Cess Act.

District Boards.

An important feature in the administration of District Boards during the quinquennium was the establishment of financial equilibrium. Until recently their financial history has shown clearly the danger of assigning stationary or inelastic revenues to meet expanding charges. The cesses are limited by law, and the other sources of revenue from ferries, pounds and the like are small. On the other hand, there was a tendency to impose new duties on the Boards without providing additional revenue to enable them to meet their responsibilities. They were therefore starved, and the results were seen in all directions. Roads were imperfectly maintained, bridges were left unbuilt or unrepaired, hospitals and dispensaries were bad, little progress was made in the improvement of the water-supply or village sanitation. Briefly, the financial position of many Boards was exceedingly unsatisfactory; and this led them to divert the road cess to purposes for which it was not intended. As stated above, the Bengal Government was opposed to such diversion and endeavoured to ensure that an amount approximately equal to the proceeds of the road cess should be devoted to the maintenance and extension of communications. Grants were therefore given to the Boards, which during recent years amounted in the aggregate to more than the sums thus diverted. But the grants were not systematically made; nor was it possible to resist the diversion of funds by some of the Boards. In 1901 and in two subsequent years the resources of the Boards were augmented by an annual grant of five lakhs from Provincial revenues, but it was then found necessary to discontinue that grant. In 1905 the Government of India increased the Provincial assignment, and since then the Bengal Government has made an annual grant to District Boards of sums amounting in the aggregate to one-fourth

of their receipts from road cess and now averaging 9 lakhs per annum. A new and growing source of income has thus been placed at their disposal; and they are now in a position to make adequate provision for their various needs, not only in respect of roads and bridges, but also in other directions, *e.g.*, to take up veterinary work, where they had not already done so, and to increase their expenditure on schools and hospitals, on water-supply and sanitation.

Another matter of the highest importance attracted Sir Andrew Fraser's attention; but he was not able to dispose of it during his tenure of office. This was the constitution of the District and Local Boards. His Honour felt that the great object of the Local Self-Government policy, to give the people political education and train them for real political life, was to a great extent frustrated by the practical exclusion of the classes whom it was most essential to enlist in the work of Local Self-Government. His Honour devoted himself to an inquiry into the causes of this exclusion, discussing it with Government officers, zamindars, non-officials interested in local self-government and others, in the course of his tours throughout the province. He then had a conference of officials and non-officials at Belvedere, which included all the non-official members of the Bengal Council, and drew up a Bill which received practically unanimous approval. This Bill, with a full expression of His Honour's views, was laid before the Government of India in September 1907; but it was deemed expedient to postpone the consideration of it until the scheme for the enlargement of Councils had been disposed of. Sir Andrew Fraser attached the greatest importance to this matter. He strongly insisted on the view that the local bodies must supply the training of Indian politicians and statesmen, that the men to receive that training must be those who have a stake in the country, and that there can be no safe and consistent progress in devolution of work and responsibility on any other system. These principles formed the basis of his proposals; and they were unanimously accepted.

Municipalities.

At an early stage in his administration Sir Andrew Fraser announced his views with regard to municipal administration as follows:—"The great object of local self-government is to bring the people generally into thorough co-operation with the Government in advancing local interests. The work is better done if the people take their share in doing it; and it is only where the people fail to rise to their responsibilities in the matter that Government would desire in any way to interfere with their administration of local affairs."

These principles were observed during the quinquennium; and public interest in municipal administration was maintained, if it was not actually on the increase, the tax-payers realizing that they must themselves be mainly responsible for the condition of the towns in which they reside. There was, in fact, a growing recognition of the fact that without their co-operation and assistance efficient administration is an impossibility—that, though Government can advise and assist the municipalities both through the local officers and by the advice of the experts employed under it, the responsibility for the success or failure of municipal administration must ultimately rest with the people themselves, *i.e.*, with the general body of rate-payers and their representatives.

One noticeable feature of the quinquennium was the increasing attention paid to drainage. As a necessary preliminary, surface drainage schemes have been prepared or are in various stages of preparation for nearly all the important municipalities and some of the smaller towns also are becoming alive to their responsibilities in this matter. The work of the Sanitary Engineer has consequently increased considerably, and the demand for his services became so great, that it was found necessary in 1904 to place an Assistant Engineer on special duty to supervise the preparation of such drainage schemes, and to move the Government of India to sanction the appointment of an Assistant Sanitary Engineer. This recommendation was accepted, and an Assistant Sanitary Engineer appointed in May 1906. Great difficulty also having been experienced in obtaining the services of properly qualified surveyors for the preparation of drainage schemes, it was decided in 1907 to entertain a staff of six Government surveyors to work under the Assistant Sanitary Engineer. The surveyors have all been fully employed since they were entertained, and are likely to be for some years to come. No less than 36 drainage schemes have been either under preparation or under consideration during the past five years. For want of funds not a single one has yet been carried out in its entirety; but it is almost superfluous to point out that drainage schemes can be carried out bit by bit as funds become available, so that it may be a question of years before any one drainage scheme can be said to be finally complete.

Perhaps the most important of these schemes is the Puri drainage scheme. The Puri Municipality itself is a comparatively small one, with a population of some 31,000 souls, which is, however, doubled, trebled and even quadrupled by the influx of pilgrims to the shrine of Jagannath at certain periods of the year. This fluctuating population renders

the municipal administration of the town one of grave and ever-increasing difficulty, and adds enormously to the task of providing and enforcing proper means of sanitation. The question, moreover, is not a merely local one, for pilgrims come from all parts of India; and unfortunately they not infrequently carry away cholera to their homes. It affects therefore not only Puri, but also the whole Province and its sanitary interests. Steps have been and are being taken to remove the evil reputation of this sacred city. A special sanitary survey of the town was carried out in 1904, and schemes have been prepared for efficient surface drainage and a pure water-supply at an aggregate estimated cost of Rs. 5,13,000. The former scheme has been taken in hand, and the latter, it is hoped, will be commenced at the close of the year. Both these schemes have received considerable financial aid from Government, which has agreed to bear the whole cost of the water-supply scheme, while a grant of Rs. 75,000 has been sanctioned for the drainage scheme.

Many sanitary improvements have also been effected in Howrah, but the most important of them is the provision of a scheme of masonry surface drains for the removal of rain and sullage water. Up to the present nearly nine miles of drains have been sanctioned, and those that have been constructed are proving most satisfactory.

No large waterworks schemes have actually been carried out during the past five years, but some will, it is hoped, shortly be brought into operation. The principal of these is the scheme for waterworks at Gaya, which when completed will be the largest waterworks in any Bengal municipality except Howrah. The estimated cost of the scheme is Rs. 6,30,000, of which 2 lakhs have been raised locally, while a grant of Rs. 75,000 has been promised by Government. An important scheme for the water-supply of Monghyr at an estimated cost of nearly 3½ lakhs has been prepared, Government agreeing to give a grant equal to one-third of the amount raised by subscriptions. A loan of Rs. 85,000 has also been given for improving the Bhagalpur waterworks In these and other directions the Lieutenant-Governor gave all the financial assistance possible to municipalities.

His Honour, it may be added, made it a point, in the course of his tours through the Province, to discuss privately municipal affairs with the leading non-official members of the Municipal Boards, besides meeting the members as a body in a public way; and he took every opportunity to acknowledge good work done by individual Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Municipal Commissioners.

The question of amending the Bengal Municipal Act was also taken up during His Honour's administration. It was generally agreed that the amendment of the Act was necessary; for since it was last amended in 1896, numerous defects had been brought to notice, and many suggestions for its improvement had been made. After consulting representative members of the Indian community, Sir Andrew Fraser came to the conclusion that instead of introducing an amending Act it would be better to re-enact the Act as a whole on more modern lines.

Calcutta Corporation.

Little more than three years had elapsed since the introduction of the Calcutta Municipal Act of 1899 when Sir Andrew Fraser assumed the reins of office. The echoes of the controversy which the Bill had evoked had scarcely died away, and the machinery of administration had not completely adjusted itself to the new conditions. The changes introduced into the law had been of a character to challenge uncompromising opposition. The proportion of elected representatives had been reduced from two-thirds to but half the whole body, and this element had thus been deprived of their commanding majority. The General Committee, from being merely a standing Committee of the Corporation, had become a separate authority co-ordinate with it, only one-third of its members being appointed by the elected Commissioners, while one third were appointed by the nominated Commissioners and the remainder nominated directly by the Government. Moreover, the Chairman had been freed from the control of the Corporation in the exercise of his executive functions. These changes had been strenuously opposed, and so bitter was the feeling, that 28 Commissioners had resigned when the Bill became law in 1899, and it had been by no means easy to find suitable men to take their place; for many good men had held aloof in the belief, which was freely expressed, that the new constitution was unworkable and was foredoomed to failure

In spite of these gloomy prognostications, the new Corporation had got promptly to work. The difficulties which had occurred in carrying out the Suburban Drainage Scheme had been surmounted and work resumed. A scheme of decentralization by districts had been worked out by a strong Committee, and the four districts were already at work, each with a separate organization equipped for dealing with engineering, conservancy and sanitation. The income-raising establishments had been reorganized, with the result that heavy arrear balances had been collected, while the Corporation dues were punctually realized. Establishments, formerly too weak, had been strengthened up to a level of efficiency; the city was

cleaner and the roads better kept; while new thoroughfares had been projected and partly constructed in the suburbs. New squares had been opened; carriage stands of patent stone had been laid down all over the city; fine ranges of municipal offices had been constructed; the conservancy stables had been re-built; and the slaughter-houses, wash-houses and market had been improved out of all recognition. Besides this, an establishment had been organized and equipped to check the waste of drinking water. The General Committee had proved itself an extremely active and useful body, and had indeed tended to encroach upon the functions of the Corporation, as it had become the practice for the General Committee to deal, in a preliminary way, with all the business that came before the Corporation. And lastly, some of the more active spirits, who had left the Corporation when the new Act came into force, had returned to the fold. Such was the state of affairs when Sir Andrew Fraser assumed office. The new Corporation was still upon its trial, but it had passed through the first three years of its existence, with happy augury for future success.

The five years of Sir Andrew Fraser's regime have witnessed a consolidation of the ground which had been gained, and a further advance along the lines already laid down in the direction of improved efficiency. At the same time extended opportunities have been afforded to the Commissioners of controlling the business of the Corporation. The system of decentralization of the work into four districts has already been mentioned, and this has proved a very convenient and effective arrangement. At first applied only to health, engineering, conservancy, and, to a limited extent, to waterworks, it has been gradually extended by the delegation to district engineers of the supervision of street lighting, the control of the building department, and the administration of waterworks generally, including the check of waste. The scheme of decentralization has also been rendered effective by giving the district engineers power to deal finally with most ordinary matters, so that it is no longer necessary for the rate-payer to run backwards and forwards between the district office and headquarters.

This scheme of decentralization depends largely for its success upon an effective system of inspection and control; and this has been secured, partly by periodical inspections, which are now made by the Deputy Chairman, and partly by the codification of the work in various departments. Manuals have been published for the accounts, records, license, assessment, collection, suit, building and *basti* departments; while they are under preparation for the

health department, and for the various offices under the control of the Chief Engineer. The opportunity of the compilation of these manuals has been taken for a close scrutiny and standardization of office methods throughout the numerous departments. A complete record system has also been organized. The records, when first brought from the Town Hall to the new offices, were in a deplorable condition. There was no arrangement and no classification, with the result that important papers were constantly missing and great delay occurred in handling old papers. The work has now been organized upon a proper basis. The old records have all been examined, classified, arranged and indexed, and useless papers have been destroyed. Current records are now regularly received from the several departments, which have been taught to classify them, and the record rooms are a model of orderly arrangement. In the printing department, a system of annual indents has been introduced, and forms have been standardized, with the result that much saving of time and labour has been effected.

One of the most far-reaching reforms effected of recent years has been the appointment of standing committees to discuss all Corporation business in a preliminary way before it comes up for debate in full meeting. In the early days of the new Corporation a practice had grown up by which the General Committee, through its sub-committees, considered a quantity of business which properly lay within the sphere of the Corporation; but in November 1903 this practice was abandoned. Some of the sub-committees were abolished, and the remainder were reconstituted, so as to confine their attention to matters within the purview of the General Committee. The Corporation thereupon appointed standing committees to deal with certain important matters, and the remainder of their business was either transacted in full meeting or was considered by committees appointed *ad hoc* for dealing with particular questions. This procedure proved unsatisfactory, and in 1906 the present system was introduced under which the Corporation annually appoints standing committees to deal in a preliminary way with all the business that comes before it. The result is that the business receives much fuller and more detailed consideration, while Commissioners are placed in a better position to control the work for which they are responsible. Matters of local interest are now dealt with by a standing committee in each district composed of the resident Commissioners, each presided over by an elected president. The introduction of these committees marks a long step forward in the direction of real self-government.

The control of the Commissioners has thus been strengthened over the conduct of business coming before the Corporation for disposal, and at the same time efforts have been made to facilitate the registration of voters so as to render the elective system more effective. Since the introduction of the new Act, but little interest has been taken in the triennial elections, an insignificant proportion of the persons entitled to vote appearing at the polls. This result is largely due to a change in the system of registration introduced with the new Act, which made it compulsory for would-be voters to make special application in order to get their names entered upon the election roll The ordinary voter was too apathetic to exert himself to this extent, and the majority consequently did not avail themselves of the franchise. The schedules of the Act have now been revised so as to make it incumbent upon the Chairman to prepare the election roll direct from the assessment and license registers, and the rolls will now be complete, so that any elector who wishes to vote can do so with a minimum of personal effort.

In none of the departments of the Corporation has improvement been more manifest than in account-keeping. This department had become dangerously weak, and matters had not been improved by an attempt to remodel the accounts upon the Government system, which was inconsistent with the Act and unsuited to the special conditions of the municipal administration of Calcutta. Under this system the integrity of the four separate municipal funds had not been maintained, while the account forms adopted afforded insufficient information. All this has been changed. The department has been strengthened, and is now able to work punctually and efficiently, under a capable Chief Accountant; and the forms and methods have been recast, in compliance with the law, so as to meet the special conditions prevailing. Efficient control has been established over stores, and the department has been equipped with sufficient information to enable it to forecast accurately financial requirements. One of the most useful reforms has been the reappointment of the Vice-Chairman as controller of the accounts and financial adviser to the Chairman—capacities in which he has rendered services of the greatest value.

The several departments responsible for the realization of revenue have shown steady improvement, and are now remarkably efficient. A good deal of trouble has been experienced in the recovery of old arrears, owing to the defective nature of the system formerly followed, as well as the delays incidental to the transaction of legal business; but these difficulties have been cleared away, and a useful change has been

introduced in the appointment of a Corporation Solicitor, who not only gives close attention to the prosecution of suits, but is always at hand to guide the administration with legal advice. Special attention has been given to the development of the Corporation's landed property, which has been accurately scheduled. Considerable areas, which were no longer required, have been sold at good prices, while others have been leased out on advantageous terms.

Close attention has also been paid to the city finances. The Commissioners are engaged in carrying out extensive drainage and water-supply schemes, which have entailed heavy capital expenditure; and the ever-mounting charges for interest and sinking fund press hardly in spite of a rapid growth of revenue. The situation will be greatly relieved at the close of the current year when the Government consolidated loan of 78 lakhs will be liquidated. Though the period under review has been marked by increased efficiency in the municipal services rendered, this has not been attained without a large increase in the cost of establishment. The financial situation has not been of a character to occasion anxiety, but it has called for the exercise of prudence and strict economy, especially in view of the impending demands of the Improvement Scheme. The Commissioners have set on foot a close scrutiny into the causes of the increase in the cost of establishment, which has for some time attracted special notice; and as a result of these enquiries, substantial economies have been effected.

A highly satisfactory feature has been the rapid increase of revenue, which is mainly due to the growing prosperity of the city and the more punctual recovery of dues. During the five years under review, the revenue has grown from 62 to 74 lakhs, or by nearly 20 per cent. Unfortunately, there has been a still heavier increase in expenditure due to the causes above stated, with the result that the accumulated balances have been correspondingly reduced. As has been already mentioned, very heavy expenditure has been incurred, and has yet to be faced, on account of water and drainage schemes. The water-supply has been a matter of constant anxiety for several years, as the population has outgrown the supply; and the consequent strain upon the system has thrown into relief the defects in the present method of distribution by direct pumping into the mains from underground reservoirs.

So far back as 1901, a proposal was brought forward for remodelling the system of distribution by pumping into elevated reservoirs; but this suggestion was negatived in the

following year, when the Commissioners preferred a scheme for enlarging the mains and reservoir accommodation, and for increasing the pumping power at the distributing stations, reliance being placed on the check of waste to equalize the supply and demand. At the end of 1903, however, fresh proposals were brought forward on a much larger scale for increasing the supply, while the scheme for constructing a huge elevated reservoir, from which the distribution should take place by gravitation, was revived in a modified form. These proposals led to a prolonged discussion, and were ultimately sanctioned by Government in January 1907, but it was not until November of that year that detailed estimates and plans were forthcoming. These have since been sanctioned, and tenders have been invited for the execution of the work, the total cost of which amounts to 69 lakhs.

Meanwhile, a considerable portion of the scheme has been carried into effect. The principal reservoir has been enlarged, and additional plant has been installed at one of the distributing centres. Many miles of trunk mains have been laid, and the consumption through the city has been brought under control by an elaborate organization of waste prevention based upon the metre system. Additional filters have been constructed, and an increase of 6 million gallons in the daily supply has been secured, as a first instalment of the 20 millions which will eventually be required. River water is used without filtering for street watering, and for drain and privy flushing; but the pressure was formerly insufficient for this purpose, with the result that dangerous breakdowns occurred. The supply has now been put on a satisfactory footing by the renovation of the engines at the principal pumping station, by laying a large trunk main to serve the northern wards, and by linking up the system of distribution from the two pumping stations.

The drainage works which have been executed are of a highly important character. The Suburban Scheme, which included the remodelling of the city outfall works, as well as the sewerage of the eastern and southern suburbs, at a cost of some 68 lakhs, has been completed, with the exception of a syphon under Tolly's Nullah. The principal works constructed during the quinquennium are the storm water reservoir, the Makalpotta sluice, the sewers east of Tolly's Nullah, and the Ballygunge and Budge-Budge pumping stations. Another useful scheme which has been completed is the drainage of Beliaghata, which is really a portion of the Fringe Area, the sewerage of which is now being commenced. A project, to which the Government has

contributed, for the drainage of the Maidan into Tolly's Nullah, is also approaching completion.

The scheme of decentralization requires separate offices in the four districts. The new central buildings were opened in 1905, and provide accommodation for one of the districts. Fine offices have also been erected in the north and south of the city, while a convenient house has been purchased for the remaining district.

The upkeep of the Calcutta roads is a matter of great difficulty owing to the high cost of metal and the destructive character of the traffic. A noticeable improvement of late years has been the kerbing and channelling of the principal roads, while many of the footpaths have been stone-paved, this improvement adding greatly to the convenience of foot passengers and to the appearance of the streets. The streets are also kept very much cleaner than formerly, when the equipment was wholly insufficient to stand any strain, and no attempt was made to remove the refuse from the streets in the afternoon. The number of animals used for street cleaning has been largely increased, and is now kept up to the standard which has been fixed with reference to the requirements for a double service throughout the city; a sufficient reserve is also maintained. The stables at Alipore have been properly equipped, contract carts and labour being no longer employed; while householders have been prohibited from throwing out refuse into the streets except during certain hours of the day. The effect of these measures is very observable, the enormous heaps of refuse which formerly littered the streets throughout the day being no longer in evidence.

The building department has greatly improved in *morale* and efficiency. This department formerly bore a bad name for venality, owing largely to the employment of a class of low-paid sircars. The latter were abolished in 1905, their place being taken by overseers trained at the Sibpur Civil Engineering College.

A marked feature of the hygienic history of this period has been a decline in plague, which had reached its maximum in 1901. Since that year the mortality has dropped in every alternate year, and in 1907 it fell far below any figures recorded since the first outbreak in 1899. Plague measures are still separately administered, though both the plague and health departments are now in charge of one Health Officer. The health department has made a steady progress in its campaign against nuisances, which are now dealt with far more effectively than was formerly the case.

Special action has been taken to compel the improvement of insanitary cowsheds and stables; and food supplies generally, and milk in particular, have been brought under more effective supervision, while the efforts of the department have been successful in inducing the owners of private markets to improve them. A large addition is being made to the Sir Stuart Hogg Market, a very paying property of the Commissioners, which is now one of the finest markets in the East.

Excellent progress has been made in improving the numerous *bastis*, though it was not until the owners were prosecuted for failing to carry out requisitions, that they could be induced to move. The Corporation has assisted towards this result by widening a number of public lanes which traverse the *bastis*. A marked tendency is now observable to replace these collections of huts by masonry buildings, and many of the old plague-spots have disappeared. In numerous instances huts have been removed wholesale; in others, while the huts have been retained, roads have been opened out, blocks have been drained, and sanitary conveniences have been provided. The result has been a marked improvement in the sanitary conditions of these *bastis*, which have long been a reproach to Calcutta. Action has also been taken to block out the unbuilt areas of the city, so as to control the future erection of huts, according to proper alignments, with sufficient road spaces.

Briefly the history of the Corporation during the quinquennium has been one of steady progress in every department. Many important reforms have been introduced; and the Commissioners and their staff are to be congratulated upon the success of their administration.

Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

For the further improvement of Calcutta it is proposed to introduce a scheme for constructing new streets and opening up congested areas within the city itself, and also providing for the expansion of its population into localities not yet fully occupied both within and without municipal limits. This project was the outcome of a sanitary survey of the town conducted in 1896 by a number of medical officers under the direction of the local Plague Commission. Their enquiries called prominent attention to the overcrowding of the northern portion of the town. It was pointed out that in one ward the population amounted to 145,000 per square mile as against 36,000 in the city of London; and it was calculated that, in the northern wards generally, 80 per cent. of the total space available was occupied by solid masonry buildings. In 1897 the then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, appointed a Building Commission,

which accepted the views of the sanitary officers, and emphasized the fact that the only remedy lay in extensive structural alterations involving the opening up of new roads and the provision of open spaces. Acting upon their report, the Lieutenant-Governor in 1899 submitted proposals for a scheme of urban improvement.

For several years after this, the subject was discussed in all its aspects by a variety of authorities, but no appreciable advance was made towards the production of a practicable scheme; and, when Sir Andrew Fraser became Lieutenant-Governor, matters stood very much where they did in 1899. In view of this fact, and feeling that the machinery of official correspondence was in some respects ill adapted to effect an expeditious settlement of the intricate questions involved, His Honour called together an advisory Conference. On this Conference, which was presided over by Sir Andrew, the Government of India, the Bengal Government, and the Corporation were represented. It was also representative of the interests of the different classes of rate-payers and of commerce; and it included the best expert knowledge obtainable on questions of urban improvement and local finance. After exhaustive consideration, a scheme was evolved and submitted to the Government of India, which, after making certain modifications, directed that it should be laid before the Corporation, other representative bodies, and the public generally for examination and opinion The views of public bodies and associations in Calcutta were accordingly obtained; and the scheme having been further considered by a Conference, which included representatives of the Government of India, the Government of Bengal, the non-official community of Calcutta, and the Municipal Corporation, detailed proposals were submitted in 1907 to the Government of India and by them to the Secretary of State. That authority has recently sanctioned the scheme.

The object of the scheme is much the same as that of the English Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890. Briefly, it is chiefly a sanitary measure, the details of which are largely based upun the precedent of the City of Bombay Improvement Act, 1898. It provides for the improvement and expansion of Calcutta by opening out congested areas, laying out or altering the alignment of streets, providing open spaces for purposes of ventilation or recreation, demolishing or altering insanitary buildings, and acquiring land for these several purposes and for the housing of persons dislodged by the execution of the improvement scheme or otherwise. The scheme also contemplates the provision of

transport at cheap rates to enable the working classes to travel from the suburbs to their place of employment. In order to provide for those who will be displaced, and also in order to provide for the probable normal growth of population and thus control the expansion of the city, blocks of unoccupied land on the outskirts are to be acquired and laid out for building. The migration of population to the suburbs is an essential part of the scheme. It will fail to attain its main object unless the inhabitants of congested areas can be not merely displaced but also attracted to the outskirts of the town. For, *ex hypothesi*, there will be no room in the immediate neighbourhood of the new roads and open spaces for these people; and if left to themselves, they will merely move to another part of the town, as near to their work as possible, and will reproduce in new areas of the city precisely the same congestion and the same insanitary conditions as the improvement scheme has been designed to remove.

The improvements will be carried out by a Board of Trustees, which will sell or lease for building the acquired land, but will not actually build houses thereon except on a very limited scale, provided that private enterprise is willing and able to undertake this work subject to the Board's control. In the remaining part of the extension the Trust will have no proprietary rights over the land, but they will administer the building regulations, and by this means will secure that all houses erected by private owners are constructed on a standard plan and in conformity with sanitary requirements.

The scheme of improvement is on a very large scale, involving a capital expenditure of 822 lakhs. It is estimated that 336 lakhs will be recouped by the sale or settlement of excess lands. For the rest it is proposed to raise 436 lakhs by loans, and the Secretary of State has agreed to make a grant-in-aid of 50 lakhs. The annual charges are estimated at nearly 21 lakhs, including interest on the loan of 436 lakhs, a sinking fund on that loan, working expenses, etc. It is estimated that 3 lakhs will be obtained as a return from land, and the remainder is to be made up by means of a transfer duty, Corporation grant, jute tax, terminal tax, and an annual Government contribution, as explained below.

The scheme provides for the levy of a jute tax subject to a maximum of two annas per bale of 5 maunds, which is less than a quarter per cent. *ad valorem*. The terminal tax is to be a tax levied at the rate of half an anna per passenger on all passengers coming into or leaving Calcutta by railway or by river steamer from outside a radius of 30 miles. It

is proposed, however, that power should be taken by law to extend the terminal tax to passengers coming from a shorter distance, should this be found necessary. It is proposed to enhance by 2 per cent. the duty imposed by the Stamp Act on certain transfers of immoveable property; while the Corporation of Calcutta will be under obligation to contribute an amount equal to 2 per cent. of the general rate, which, together with the proceeds of the transfer duty, shall be subject to a minimum of 7½ lakhs a year. The Secretary of State has also promised a grant of Rs. 1,50,000 per annum for 60 years on condition that the scheme of taxation mentioned above becomes law in its entirety and is made effective for the full term of 60 years." That scheme, it will be noticed, has been framed so as to secure contributions from all classes of the community, and only one, the terminal tax, will fall on the poorer classes.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Fraserganj is the headquarters of an island owned by Government in the extreme south-west of the Sundarbans. The island, which is marked on the Admiralty Charts as Mecklinburg Island, is 9 miles long from north to south, and 3 miles broad from east to west, its area being 9,439 acres or a little over 15 square miles. It faces the Bay of Bengal, and is protected from encroachment and from storm-waves by a long belt of sand dunes to the south and by a large well-wooded island to the east. Unlike other islands in the Sundarbans, there is a considerable area devoid of salt. Not only is cultivation possible, but the island has the advantage of a good climate. In the cold weather, indeed, the climate leaves little to be desired; for one enjoys bright clear weather, often when Calcutta is under cloud, cool days and nights, and soft breezes from the sea. Added to this, there is a beautiful sandy beach stretching towards the Bay of Bengal. **Fraserganj.**

Sir Andrew Fraser, realizing the capabilities of the place, determined to turn them to account for the good of the public, and initiated a scheme for the reclamation and development of the island. Sir Andrew had two objects in view:—(1) the colonization of the island by industrious cultivators, and (2) its development as a health resort for the inhabitants of Calcutta and its neighbourhood. As regards the first object, it may be stated that soon after

he assumed office the system of administration in the Sundarbans, by which land was leased out to capitalists, was revised. It was condemned on three principal grounds. It caused a heavy loss of revenue; it afforded no adequate control over the landlord; and it encouraged the custom of sub-infeudation, by which middlemen are introduced between the original grantee and the cultivator. It was, accordingly, decided that the leasing of lands to capitalists should be stopped and that a system of raiyatwari settlement, *i.e.*, settlement with actual cultivators, should be introduced as an experimental measure. In other words, a system of peasant colonization financed by the State was to be adopted for the reclamation of the waste lands in the Sundarbans. His Honour selected Fraserganj as the place on which to carry out this scheme of colonization.

His Honour also had in view the benefit of Calcutta. At present, its residents requiring change of air and scenery have to make a long railway journey to reach Puri or Darjeeling; and the climate of the latter place does not suit all constitutions. Fraserganj, however, is not far from Calcutta, the journey by steamer occupying only about 9 or 10 hours; and it has many natural advantages as a health resort. But, before these natural facilities could be utilized, it was necessary to improve communications, to clear jungle, to construct protective embankments, to build roads, to lay out sites, etc. Work was begun in November 1904, and already much has been done in the way of reclamation, in spite of unfavourable seasons and difficulties in obtaining labour. The sea-face has been greatly improved, a dispensary, dâk bungalow and two pavilions have been erected, tanks excavated, and protective embankments constructed. A golf course has also been laid out, and a steamer has till recently been subsidized to make trips to the place every week-end.

Sir Andrew Fraser has throughout taken a personal interest in this scheme. It owes its inception to him; and he has exercised a close supervision over its development. Fraserganj may, indeed, be said to owe its creation to him and it was felt to be only fitting that the place should bear his name. For the island was formerly a barren waste known by fishermen as Narayantola—a name so common that the post office authorities, to prevent confusion, asked that it should be changed; and His Honour acceded to the request that the place should be called after him.

APPENDIX.

On the 7th November 1908, while the preceding pages were passing through the press, there was another determined attempt to murder Sir Andrew Fraser. His Honour had promised to preside at a lecture in the Overtoun Hall, Calcutta. While he was walking towards the platform, a young Bengali student rushed forward with a loaded revolver. When within a foot or less of His Honour, he twice attempted to shoot him; but providentially the weapon missed fire each time. The would-be assassin was seized after a short struggle; and Sir Andrew proceeded to preside over the meeting with characteristic calmness. Two days later an Inspector of Police, who had some months before succeeded in tracking down one of the murderers of Mrs. and Miss Kennedy, was shot dead in one of the lanes of Calcutta, revolvers again being used. It is significant of the state of public feeling that these outrages were at once recognized and denounced as the work of the section of Bengali Hindus whose methods had earned for them the sobriquet of the terrorist or anarchist party.

B. S. Press—26.11.1908—1052J—620—C. W. and others.

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